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FOR RESUMPTION OF IN-PERSON PSS CLASSES ON JAN. 3, 2022:

'In-person classes for 70% eligible vaccinated schools'

By JOSHUA SANTOS
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REPORTER

High schools of the CNMI Public School System with 70% of its eligible students already vaccinated against COVID-19 will resume in-person classes on Jan. 3, 2022.

See CLASSES on Page 4

COMMUNITY VULNERABILITY

LEGEND:

- Red: Least safe
- Orange
- Yellow
- Blue
- Green: Safest

Source: Office of the Governor

Torres says he will not resign

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
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REPORTER

Although the House of Representatives has the numbers to impeach him, Gov. Ralph

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Court upholds US cockfighting ban, rejects challenge in Guam. **PAGE 2**

'All divert funds will be used to improve Tinian airport' **PAGE 3**



61 more cases ID'd

By JOSHUA SANTOS
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REPORTER

The Commonwealth Healthcare Corp. announced Wednesday night that 61 positive cases of COVID-19 were confirmed on Dec. 20, with

See 61 on Page 4

CHIGET BEACH IS REOPENED

After months of clearing work, the Chiget Beach at the former Tinian Mortar Range was finally reopened to the public Wednesday. Naval Facilities Engineering Systems Command Pacific and NAVFAC Marianas, in partnership with the CNMI government, worked together to restore public access to Chiget Beach. Clearing work started in February this year. The area was once part of a World War II battlefield, then the mortar range was used as a training facility from 1945 to 1994. Field work began in November 2020 in an effort to restore access to the beach.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO



AT A GLANCE

As of 6:09pm, Dec. 23, 2021

VACCINATIONS IN THE CNMI

Eligible Population: 92.7%
Fully Vaccinated: 92.7%

Days since last community transmission: 2

Pfizer/BioNTech		
Initiated:	36,372	
Fully Vaccinated:	33,989	
Moderna		
Initiated:	5,271	
Fully Vaccinated:	4,832	
Janssen		
Fully vaccinated:	1,117	

GUAM	OLD	NEW	TOTAL
Positive	19,414	13	19,427
Recovered	18,913	0	18,913
Active	231	13	244
Deaths	270	0	270

SAIPAN	OLD	NEW	TOTAL
Positive	2,580	61	2,641
Traced via Travel Screening	285	5	290
Traced via Community Screening	2,295	56	2,351
Deaths	8	0	8

Source: Joint Information Center - Guam, Commonwealth Healthcare Corp., <https://www.vaccinatecnmi.com/vax-dashboard/>

CURRENT COVID-19 VACCINATIONS



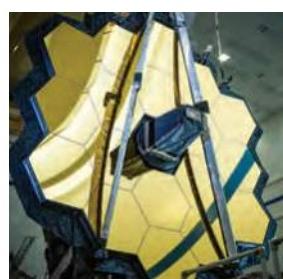
INSIDE



LOCAL

Here's a guide on where to go for that last-minute Christmas shopping on Saipan.

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SCIENCE & TECH

The Hubble Space Telescope's successor is finally on the brink of flight.

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LIFE & STYLE

A monument that commemorates the 1989 Tiananmen Square massacre is removed in Hong Kong.

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SCAN ME WITH A COMPATIBLE QR READER TO KEEP UPDATED ON ALL THE LATEST NEWS.



Local

Court upholds US cockfighting ban, rejects challenge in Guam

By JENNIFER SINCO KELLEHER
ASSOCIATED PRESS

HONOLULU (AP)—A U.S. appeals court ruling Wednesday affirmed a ban against cockfighting in U.S. territories.

A panel of 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals judges ruled against a Guam businessman whose 2019 lawsuit argued the ban was unconstitutional. Sedfrey Linsangan said in his

lawsuit that “gamefowl raising and competition” is part of his “culture, custom and tradition.”

In 2018, former President Donald Trump signed a law banning all animal fighting in U.S. territories. The law took effect in 2019. Prior to the law, cockfighting had been illegal in the 50 states but not U.S. territories.

Linsangan appealed after a U.S. judge in Guam denied his motion for a preliminary injunction against the prohibition.

Linsangan didn’t immediately respond to a text message from The Associated Press seeking comment on the latest ruling.

Attorneys representing the United States in the case didn’t immediately respond to an email from the AP.

The ruling said Linsangan failed to show that cockfighting is a fundamental right.

“Linsangan’s evidence of cockfighting as a cultural practice both predating and outside of American history does not show that cockfighting is objectively deeply rooted in our nation’s tradition,” the ruling said.

The U.S. Supreme Court in October turned away a challenge to the federal law brought by individuals and organizations that argued Congress exceeded its power

in applying the ban to Puerto Rico. They noted that “cockfighting is deeply ingrained in the island’s history, tradition and culture.”

Torres says if House cares for retirees, they should act on resolution for \$500 bonuses

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
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REPORTER

Pointing out that what the Senate passed was not an appropriation bill but just a resolution, Gov. Ralph DLG Torres said Tuesday he could not understand why the House of Representatives did not act on the resolution that was supposed to pave way for the payment of \$500 bonuses to government retirees during the holiday season.

In response to a question during a radio press briefing, Torres said the House’s inaction on Senate Joint Resolution 22-05 is “very unfortunate” and that he feels sorry for the retirees.

“Now I’m going to say this: If you really care for the retirees, why don’t you act on it? There’s a resolution there; they’ve done this in the past,” he said.

SJR 22-05, authored by Senate President Jude U. Hofsneider (R-Tinian), seeks to approve Torres’ request to the Legislature to reprogram \$1.3 million from the general fund for the payment of the retirees’ \$500 bonuses. The Senate unanimously adopted the resolution last week.

At the House session Monday, House Speaker Edmund S. Villagomez (Ind-Saipan) directed further review for the resolution after vice speaker

The Animal Wellness Action said it hailed the ruling because it came days before Guam cockfighting derbies advertised for New Year’s Day.

RELATED NEWS

■ ‘Senate has authority to introduce retirees’ bonus resolution’

PAGE 9

Blas Jonathan T. Attao (R-Saipan) raised the need for clarification from the Department of Finance and the administration. Chiefly, his argument was that any distribution of funds should begin in the House as the constitutionally mandated holder of the government’s purse strings.

At the press briefing Tuesday, Torres said they have the \$1.3 million and yet the House didn’t act on the resolution that would have allowed the release of the funds.

“You know, honestly for all the retirees, I am sorry that you’re not getting your bonuses. I gave you my word. The funds are there. They removed my...100% reprogramming authority,” the governor said.

Torres said the Senate already passed the resolution and if the House would just act on it, the retirees will get their \$500 bonuses.

He assured the retirees, however, that the \$500 is still there for them and that he is hoping that the House can act on it, whether they do their own resolution or just pass it.

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SPECIAL BOARD MEETING NOTICE



Pursuant to Public Law 8-41, Section 11, the Marianas Visitors Authority hereby gives notice that a Special Board of Directors Meeting will be held on Monday, December 27, 2021 at 9:00a.m. in the MVA Conference Room, Saipan MP 96950

MEETING AGENDA

- 1) Preliminary Matters
 - a. Call to Order
 - b. Roll Call
 - c. Adoption of Agenda
 - d. Oath of Office: New Board Member
- 2) Public Comments
- 3) Committee Reports
 - a. CNMI TRIP Korea
 - i. Airlines Incentive
 - ii. Travel Agency Incentive
 - iii. Travel Bucks
- 4) Executive Session
- 5) Miscellaneous/Announcements
- 6) Adjournment

/s/ Viola Alepuyo
Chairperson, MVA Board of Directors

'All divert funds will be used to improve Tinian airport'

By KIMBERLY B. ESMORES
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REPORTER

The Commonwealth Ports Authority clarified yesterday that it will be using the entire \$21 million divert lease proceeds to make improvements that would allow for direct international flights to Tinian, just not to the scale that people were dreaming about 20 years ago.

In response to concerns raised by a Tinian resident regarding CPA's recent report about the decision to downscale its previous plans for the

DPS chief: Complaint unsigned, invalid

By KIMBERLY B. ESMORES
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REPORTER

Department of Public Safety Commissioner Robert Guerrero described yesterday as invalid an unsigned complaint against him from 2019 that he said was instigated to ruin his confirmation process.

In a brief statement yesterday, Guerrero, he said the 2019 sexual harassment complaint, which is currently making the rounds on social media, has been brought up numerous times on social media by Rep. Ed Propst (D-Saipan) and was unsigned, which makes it technically invalid.

"That's the unsigned, self-statement instigated by some former law enforcement officer that was sent to the Senate to ruin my confirmation process. I know the Office of Personnel Management looked

'No TF staff downsizing at NMI quarantine sites'

By JOSHUA SANTOS
joshua_santos@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

There will be no downsizing of staff at government-run quarantine sites.

Governor's COVID-19 Task Force chair Warren F. Villagomez said this Tuesday during a guest appearance on Gov. Ralph DLG Torres' radio news briefing.



Villagomez

While recent changes to travel protocols effective Dec. 20 allows fully vaccinated travelers to quarantine at their home or lodging while waiting for their COVID-19 arrival testing results, the protocols still require unvaccinated travelers to quarantine at a designated government site for seven days and to be tested after the seven-day quarantine. Any traveler who tests positive will be required to quarantine at a site for 10 days.

Currently, there are three active government-run sites: the former Marianas Resort, Pa-

Tinian International Airport—made in conjunction with the Tinian leadership—CPA chair Kimberly Kong-Hinds said those funds will most definitely be used to improve the Tinian airport but not to the extent many on the island had envisioned.

"I'm not sure where in my statement gave the impression that CPA will not be using the divert proceeds to make improvements that would allow for direct international flights. To be clear, CPA will be expending all those funds for

those purposes, just not to the scale that people were dreaming about 20 years ago. CPA did not make this decision on its own. It was in consultation with the Tinian leadership. Moreover, CPA cannot make plans based on a hope that someone is going to build a hotel. Policy decisions should be driven by data and the realities of the tourism industry," she said.

Currently, King-Hinds said, CPA is in the process of building a fuel storage facility, upgrading the facility to incorporate federal requirements

for Transportation Security Administration and Customs and Border Protection, and parking expansion.

"\$21 million is not a lot of money when you're talking about construction on Tinian. We've committed to building a fuel storage facility, upgrading the facility to incorporate federal requirements for TSA and CBP, and parking expansion, which is already ongoing. I'm not sure if \$21 million is enough to do all that but that's the focus in terms of priorities," she said.

According to a previous statement from King-Hinds, she explained that it has long been the dream to build an airport on Tinian with infrastructure that can welcome international direct flights. However, she said the reality is that it just might not be possible right now because there aren't enough rooms for accommodation due to military activities on the island.

Because of this, CPA, in collaboration with the Tinian leadership, is looking at adjusting its previous plans to downscale considerably and make investments that are aligned with the island's real-

ity, she said.

"The reality is, while these military activities are welcomed and can be beneficial economically, it's not conducive to growing our local tourism industry. So, we are now looking at the master plan to make adjustments that would still allow for direct flights but not in the way people dreamed about 20 years ago," King-Hinds said.

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'So has the CNMI spent \$21.7M COVID-19 relief funds or not?'

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
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REPORTER

Rep. Christina E. Sablan (D-Saipan) wants clarity from the Department of Finance whether the \$21.7 million in Coronavirus Relief Funds had already been spent or not by the CNMI government.

Finance Secretary David DLG Atalig reiterated Tuesday his previous statement that the CNMI had already exhausted the \$21.7 million that U.S. House Speaker Nancy Pe-

TORRES

From Page 1

DLG Torres said he does not intend to resign.

In response to a question during Tuesday's radio press briefing, Torres said the issue brought up by the House of Representatives Judiciary and Governmental Operations Committee against him is different compared to the case against then-governor Benigno R. Fitial, who was the first governor to be impeached by the House when 16 representatives voted for his impeachment in 2013. Fitial, however, resigned before the Senate could start the trial.

Torres said the House JGO Committee, which is investigating his expenditures of public funds and travels, should be composed of representatives who are fair and have no political agenda. He said JGO members should look at the facts and accept the facts.

Citing the testimony of Commonwealth Utilities Corp. executive director Gary P. Camacho before the JGO, Torres said that Camacho addressed the \$177,000 utility billings issue. The governor said Camacho acknowledged that the government did not and has not paid a penny to the governor's account as they took care of that account.

Torres said he was the one who called CUC to look at the problem with the utility billings and then they addressed that issue.

"They [JGO] did not acknowledge that. There are so many issues that they didn't want to acknowledge because they have their own political agenda," Torres said, adding that he does not want to go into

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From Page 1

12 found through contact tracing, 44 through community testing, and five through travel testing.

CHCC also reported that, as of Dec. 21, there have been 1,615 recoveries, 730 active cases, and five COVID-19-related deaths of the cases since Oct. 28.

As of Dec. 22, 12 patients are in the hospital due to COVID-19, of which nine are unvaccinated and three are vaccinated, otherwise also known as "breakthrough" cases. CHCC reported that one of the 12 is on a ventilator and one patient was discharged from CHCC's hospital.

CHCC reported a total of 395 COVID-19 vaccine shots were administered on Dec. 22, bringing the

» Atalig reiterates funds already exhausted

losi had asked about.

At a House session Monday, Sablan noted that there has been some back and forth between the U.S. Congressional Office and the CNMI Department of Finance and the administration as to the status of these CARES Act funds.

"Do we or do we not have \$21 mil-

lion that remains unspent?" Sablan asked, adding that the money could lapse and be returned to the federal government come Dec. 31, 2021.

She noted that there had been another response from the Congressional Office that still seeks clarification whether these funds will be spent or not, or have they been spent or not.

The lawmaker said that Atalig's letter of Dec. 8, 2021, to Delegate Gregorio Kilili C. Sablan (Ind-MP) is not all that clear. She noted that the House Ways and Means Committee

Last Sept. 27, Camacho testified that Torres called him in November 2019 and raised a concern about the high volume of water use at his As Teo property. Camacho said this led to CUC's investigation if there is a water leak and the subsequent installation of a separate water meter to the piggery, which is located in the same As Teo estate. The governor's brother, Jack Torres, owns the piggery.

The impeachment resolution alleges that Torres used his position as governor to commit theft of utility services by obtaining in excess of \$177,000 in taxpayer-funded utility benefits from CUC for his privately-owned residences from February 2015 through August 2021.

The resolution further states that includes exorbitant utility expenses associated with the commercial piggery that was operating on his residential property.

The resolution alleges that Torres further requested and received unjustly utility benefits for at least two residences at the same time, in As Teo and in Koblerville, for a period of approximately 16 months.

At the radio briefing Tuesday, Torres questioned the composition of JGO Committee and said House Speaker Edmund S. Villagomez (Ind-Saipan) should put somebody in the JGO Committee and in the Special Investigating Committee on Impeachment that have no political agenda, no political motive, and that would look at the facts and be fair.

Regarding his lawsuit against the JGO Committee chaired by Rep. Celina R. Babauta (D-Saipan), Torres said the case will proceed, but that he would like to make it on the record

CNMI's vaccination rate to 92.5%. Registering for COVID-19 vaccines can be done at www.vaccinatecnmi.com.

CHCC also reported that a total of 574 COVID-19 tests were conducted on Dec. 21, comprising travel and surveillance testing, not including the testing numbers from the Department of Fire & Emergency Medical Services' antigen COVID-19 testing. Registering for community-based testing can be done at <https://covid-testing.chcc.health/>.

More accessible

In an interview earlier this week, CHCC chief executive officer Esther L. Muña said the goal for CHCC in creating the COVID-19 Community Center at the Koblerville Youth Center is to have a single place where the community can get answers to

that House sergeant-at-arms Pedro Towai should not be named as a co-defendant in the lawsuit.

Torres stressed that it's not just about the lawsuit, but the integrity of the governor's position and the Office of the Governor. He said the legislators can't just arbitrarily subpoena the governor for the reason that they are not happy with him.

"So now they can go ahead and subpoena the Supreme Court chief justice, subpoena any of the judges because politically they don't like who they are, or they want to get into their expenditures?" Torres asked.

Babauta introduced Monday House Resolution 22-14 impeaching Torres for alleged commission of felonies, corruption, and neglect of duty in violation of Article 3, Section 19 of the CNMI Constitution.

As of yesterday, there were 13 representatives who have already signed the impeachment resolution. Torres will be impeached if at least 14 House representatives vote to adopt the resolution. Once the governor is impeached by the House, the nine-seat Senate will then hold a trial. If six senators vote for his conviction, Torres will be removed from office.

Gilbert Birnbrich, who is the counsel for the Office of the Governor, told Villagomez in a letter Tuesday that, given the significance of the potential removal of a governor, the Special Investigating Committee on Impeachment and the procedures by which it operates should be above reproach.

Birnbrich said as to the membership of the committee, they request that they be evenly divided among those who caucus with Republicans and with Democrats.

their questions and concerns about COVID-19.

"The purpose of the center is to provide you with the information because once you know [more about COVID-19], I believe that some of that fear can go away... That's really what our whole purpose here is—we want to be more accessible to you [and] bring the services to you rather than...you not knowing and doing things that could [put your families at risk]," said Muña.

The center is a hub where individuals can obtain their COVID-19 results, get confirmatory testing done, get assessed for monoclonal antibody treatment, and obtain guidance on all COVID-19 matters, including what to do if they are a close contact of a positive case. The center is open seven days a week including holidays from 8am to 4pm.

chairman repeatedly asked Atalig for the expenditure report on the CARES Act fund, not to mention all of these other federal streams of funding that are coming into the Commonwealth.

"But we have not seen the reports that we've been asking for," Sablan said.

She said she remains concerned, like many lawmakers are, that the CNMI could be at risk of losing out on these \$21.7 million if they don't get some clarity and confirmation from the administration as soon as possible.

She said she understands that the House Ways and Means Committee is once again submitting a request to Atalig.

"And I would hope that there would be some briefing for this body shortly, ideally before the holidays," the lawmaker said.

In response to *Saipan Tribune's* inquiry during Tuesday's radio press briefing, Atalig reiterated his previous statement that the \$21.7 million had already been spent. He said he had already responded to Delegate Kilili Sablan where he shared that they've exhausted those funds.

Atalig earlier disclosed to *Saipan*

Tribune that all \$36.3 million in CARES Act funding, including the \$21.7 million, had already been spent but they have not finalized their report to the U.S. Treasury yet.

Atalig said Tuesday that he knows that Delegate Sablan and Pelosi are doing their due diligence to ensure that if they do have funds available that they make sure they spend it. He said their final report is not due until Jan. 10, 2022. In that final report, Atalig said, they will show that they've exhausted all the funds.

"Keep in mind we still have about \$54 million of expenses that have not been reimbursed by [the Federal Emergency Management Agency]," he said.

Atalig said in their final report they will show line item expenditures identified as against the CARES Act funds.

Early this month, Delegate Kilili Sablan wrote to Gov. Ralph DLG Torres informing him that Pelosi had asked him about the \$21.7 million COVID-19 relief funds for the CNMI that will be expiring on Dec. 31.

Pelosi asked Sablan for the governor's plan of expenditure for these funds.

Head Start Programs on Tinian and Rota will "continue to operate full face-to-face as usual."

On Saipan, the Early Head Start/Head Start program will offer "home-based and center-based services for families until further notice," Ada added.

He wrote that "all PSS elementary, middle, and high schools are ready to welcome back students with a high standard of safety and care" and listed several safety and protection measures that all schools have been doing and will continue to do.

These measures include promoting COVID-19 vaccines for those eligible; ensuring that the "3 W's" are observed and enforced; scheduling regular deep cleaning and sanitizing of all campuses and facilities; conducting daily routine temperature checks; and ventilating classrooms and offices before, during, and after school hours.

Deferring to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Ada wrote that the CDC continues to emphasize that "vaccination is the leading public health prevention strategy to end the COVID-19 pandemic." Ada added that PSS will continue to work closely with its CHCC partners on upcoming plans for school-based screening/testing.

The resumption of full in-person classes on Jan. 3, 2022, came after several CNMI Board of Education meetings to reschedule the reopening date.

The board met on Nov. 12 to discuss the original resumption date, Nov. 15. The board on Nov. 12 voted unanimously to move the reopening date to Nov. 29.

PSS then announced on Nov. 28 that it opted to go with a staggered return to in-person classes based on schools' COVID-19 screening/testing schedule.

The board most recently met on Dec. 7 and unanimously voted to set the full in-person reopening to Jan. 3, 2022.

CLASSES

From Page 1

In a memorandum dated Dec. 21, Education Commissioner Dr. Alfred B. Ada said the CNMI's high vaccination rate—which stood at 92.7% yesterday—"makes it safe for PSS to transition back to full in-person learning for secondary schools at a 70% vaccination rate."

Ada wrote that PSS' Commonwealth Healthcare Corp. partners have concurred with these findings.

PSS posted Ada's memorandum on its social media pages yesterday.

As of writing the memorandum, Ada listed six PSS schools that have reached or surpassed the 70% vaccination threshold and thus will resume full in-person classes come Jan. 3:

- Marianas High School
- Saipan Southern High School
- Kagman High School
- Tinian Jr./ Sr. High School on Tinian
- Dr. Rita H. Inos Jr./ Sr. High School on Rota
- Da'Ok Academy

Ada also listed six schools below or nearing 70%. If these schools reach 70% before Jan. 3, they will open for full in-person classes as well. Otherwise, the schools will continue on with cohorting schedules that were in place before the transition to online instruction on Oct. 29. The schools are:

- Hopwood Middle School at 69%
- Tanapag Middle School at 66%
- Francisco M. Sablan Middle School at 62%
- Dandan Middle School at 59%
- Chacha Oceanview Middle School at 56%

PSS's elementary schools on Saipan, Tinian, and Rota "will continue with full in-person learning as scheduled prior to Oct. 29," Ada wrote, and PSS' Early Head Start/

Website to be created for Tinian Church's construction



By KIMBERLY B. ESMORES
kimberly_esmores@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

A local web developing company has informed the Friends of San Jose Church Tinian that they will be donating their time and skills to create a website that would showcase the development of the San Jose Church on Tinian.

According to FSJC president Kimberlyn King-Hinds, FSJC was excited to announce its new partnership with Turnkey Solutions, a local web developing company, which is donating their time and talent to help design a Web page that will be launched to kick off the beginning of a major fund-raising campaign to build a permanent concrete church for the people of Tinian.

Turnkey Solutions is a local CNMI consulting firm that specializes in customized Web development and design, database development and management, search engine optimization, and data analytics utilizing

the latest technology trends.

King-Hinds said the design for the new church is in the final stages of completion and it will be open to the public for viewing once the website is up and running.

"The Web page will allow users to view the design of the new building, receive regular updates on the progress of the project and allow donors to make monetary contributions with ease," she said.

The organization's president noted that the cost to build the new concrete church will be around \$2 million and that information, as well as the link to donate, will also be available on the website.

"We anticipate the cost of new concrete church to be well over 2 million dollars. Having a professionally designed website that is easy to navigate as well as make donations is a critical component to the success of our fundraising efforts and we are so grateful to have friends at Turnkey Solutions who deem this cause wor-

Public warned of rough seas

A high surf advisory is in effect from 6am Friday to 6am Saturday along north facing reefs Saipan, Tinian, and Rota.

High rip current risk is in effect from Friday morning through Saturday afternoon along north and east facing reefs.

Based on the information received from the National Weather Service in Guam and compiled at the CNMI Emergency Operations Center-State Warning Point, large breaking waves of 7 to 10 feet and dangerous rip currents are present along north and east facing reefs of Rota, Tinian, and Saipan. For the high surf advisory, until 6am Saturday. For the high rip current risk, through Saturday afternoon.

These conditions will

create dangerous swimming and surfing conditions and localized beach erosion. Rip currents can sweep even the best swimmers away from shore into deeper water.

A large northeast swell is expected to peak Friday night before subsiding Saturday afternoon, dropping below hazardous conditions for north facing reefs. A high rip current risk may remain through the rest of the weekend along north and east facing reefs.

Inexperienced swimmers should stay out of the water along north and east facing shores. Elsewhere, swim near a lifeguard. If caught in a rip current, swim in a direction following the shoreline until you are out of the current, then head in to shore. (PR)

thy of their time and talent," King-Hinds stated.

Earlier this year, the group completed the first phase of the project in December with the turnover of the refurbished Tinian Social Hall,

Friends of San Jose Church Tinian president Kimberlyn King-Hinds, second from right, said the association is partnering with Turnkey Solutions to design a Web page that will be launched to kick off the beginning of a major fundraising campaign to build a permanent concrete church for the people of Tinian.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

which is now the temporary place of worship for the Tinian Catholic parishioners.

The second phase of the project is to build a concrete, air-conditioned church building that will include living quarters for the priest, parish office space, baptistry, choir, and chapel to accommodate smaller daily Mass services.

The intent is for the design to as much as possible replicate the original church that was built by the people of Tinian in the 1950's but was destroyed by Supertyphoon Yutu in 2018.

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CPA seeks Kilili's help with US DOT, Congress

The Commonwealth Ports Authority has requested Delegate Gregorio Kilili C. Sablan (Ind-MP) to contact the U.S. House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure and its Subcommittee on Aviation to see whether EAS-eligibility requirements can be further amended to allow the CNMI's participation in the program.

Although CPA has already started preparing its application for the U.S. Department of Transportation's Small Community Air Service Development Program, CPA board chair Kimberlyn King-

Hinds still needs Sablan's help in possibly getting the U.S. DOT to amend requirement for its Essential Air Service Program to include the CNMI

King-Hinds explained that the significance of the EAS program is that it guarantees that small communities like the CNMI maintain a minimal level of scheduled air service.

"As for the Essential Air Service Program, it is my sincere hope that the CNMI can be re-designated as an eligible community, especially since the purpose of the EAS program is to guarantee that

small communities maintain a minimal level of scheduled air service. It is my opinion that the amendment limiting EAS-eligible communities to those participating between Sept. 30, 2010, and Sept. 30, 2011, should have exempted more than just communities in Alaska and Hawaii—it should have also exempted other similarly-situated non-contiguous communities, such as those found within the CNMI. If that provision of the FAA Modernization and Reform Act is the only barrier to the CNMI's designation as

an EAS-eligible community, then I ask that you please consider contacting members of the U.S. House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure and its Subcommittee on Aviation to see whether EAS-eligibility requirements can be further amended to allow the CNMI's participation in the EAS program," King-Hinds wrote Sablan.

In a previous letter to CPA, Sablan explained that according to aviation policy experts of the Congressional Research Service, Congress has occasionally modified EAS eligibility

requirements, but it has never designated a specific location or community as eligible for EAS. At one point, Sablan said, airlines servicing the CNMI received subsidy under the EAS program but allowed the subsidies to lapse. This resulted in the removal of the CNMI from the EAS-eligible list.

"By way of history, the EAS program was established in the Airline Deregulation Act of 1978 (P.L. 95-504) to ensure that small U.S. communities, which had been served by certificated airlines prior to deregulation, maintained a certain level of commercial air service. Rota, Tinian, and Saipan were all designated as eligible communities in 1978. In fact, airlines serving the Northern Marianas received EAS subsidies in the 1980s. Continental Air Micronesia was provided an EAS subsidy to provide air service to Rota in 1982 and in 1984. At some point in time, however, CPA and the airlines allowed these subsidies to lapse for reasons the congressional office has not been able to determine," he said.

Because Rota, Tinian, and Saipan airports were no longer receiving subsidies, they became ineligible for future assistance when the FAA Modernization and Reform Act that scaled the program nationwide in 2012.

"The law discontinued eligibility for the program for over 600 communities that were not receiving EAS subsidy," Sablan said. *(Kimberly A. Bautista)*

Water service outage in SV, Dandan Homestead, Naftan

There will be a scheduled water service interruption on Tuesday, Dec. 28, 2021, from 8am to 4pm for customers in the Upper and South sides of San Vicente, Dandan Homestead, and Naftan areas.

The scheduled water service interruption is to allow CUC's contractor for the San Vicente Water Tank Replacement Project to connect the new water tank to the existing distribution line. Water service to the affected areas will resume soon thereafter.

This project is part of the San Vicente Water Tank Replacement Project to provide a more reliable water system to the people of the CNMI. It is funded by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

The Commonwealth Utilities Corp. continues to work diligently to minimize any inconvenience to its customers. For more information, contact the CUC Customer Hotline (236-4333) or monitor our Facebook page for the latest updates (<https://www.facebook.com/CommonwealthUtilitiesCorporation/>). *(PR)*

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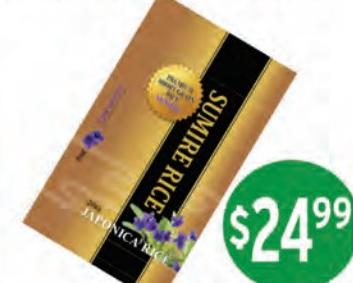
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Merry Christmas
AND HAPPY NEW YEAR 2022

Warmest thoughts for a wonderful Christmas!
May peace, love and prosperity follow you always!

David M. Apatang
Mayor of Saipan and staff

'Senate has authority to introduce retirees' bonus resolution'

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
ferdie.delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Senate legal counsel Antonette R. Villagomez is of the opinion that the Senate has the constitutional authority to introduce and adopt Senate Joint Resolution 22-05 that approved Gov. Ralph DLG. Torres' request to reprogram \$1.3 million from the general fund for the payment of \$500 bonuses to government retirees.

Villagomez, who issued the legal opinion Monday upon the request of Senate President Jude U. Hofsneider (R-Tinian), was responding to questions raised whether the Senate had the constitutional authority to introduce the joint resolution and adopt it.

Hofsneider is the author of Senate Joint Resolution 22-05. He earlier stated that the senators agreed with the importance of expeditiously entertaining Torres' request in support of the retirees.

Villagomez concluded that pursuant to the Senate's constitutional authority under NMI Constitution Article 2 and its 22nd Official Rules of Procedure, the Senate properly introduced and adopted Senate Joint Resolution 22-05 last Dec. 15 by unanimous decision.

Villagomez said the Senate's introduction and adoption of Senate Joint Resolution 19-04 and the House of Representatives' adoption of that resolution is clear precedence that the Senate is constitution-

ally and statutorily authorized to introduce and adopt a Senate joint resolution pursuant to the Commonwealth Code.

The House did not act on the Senate resolution at its session Monday; House Speaker Edmund S. Villagomez (Ind-Saipan) said he'd like to keep the resolution on the agenda for further review.

He made the decision after vice speaker Blas Jonathan T. Attao (R-Saipan) underscored the need for more information from the Department of Finance and the administration.

Attao stated among the reasons that any distribution of funds should begin in the House and anything that has to do with revenues that's coming from the Senate is illegal under the CNMI Constitution.

"It's the authority of the House to move those funds," Attao had said.

But Antonette Villagomez cited the Senate's introduction and adoption of Senate Joint Resolution 19-04 speaks to the same issue. That resolution, which the Senate had introduced on Sept. 24, 2015 and adopted on Sept. 25, 2015, authorized reprogramming authority for the governor in excess of the limits of the Commonwealth Code and Public Law 18-66 to respond to the Typhoon Soudelor disaster and to meet the Commonwealth's 10% cost-sharing obligation. Villagomez said the House adopted SJR 19-04 on Sept. 29, 2015.

Similarly, Antonette Vil-

Marianas Agupa' radio talk show to feature Chamorro cultural segment

The Inetnun Kutturan Natibun Marianas/Kkoor Aramasal Marianas, a non-profit organization in the CNMI, is inviting the public to tune in to the Marianas Agupa' Talk Show every other Saturday on KWAW Magic 100.3 FM, where they will be featuring a Chamorro cultural segment.

The segment aims to celebrate and recognize our cultural experts and encourage public interactions in Humanities-related topics, including culture, tradition, history, language, traditional healing practices, local names of places in the CNMI, music, among others. Topics will be announced a week in advance every Saturday. The next talk show topic (*I KANTAN CHAMORRO*) will be this Dec. 25, 2021, starting at 10am.

The Cultural Talk Show will begin at 10am for one hour every other Saturday. Cultural



File photo shows Senate legal counsel Antonette R. Villagomez, right.

FERDIE DE LA TORRE

lagomez said, SJR 22-05 intends to approve and authorize the governor's request to reprogram funds to pay for the retirees' bonus pursuant to a statute.

She also cited another case, SJR 14-04m, which authorized an increase in the number of full-time employment positions for the Legislative Bureau from 35, as authorized under continuing appropriations pursuant to the Appropriations and Budget Authority Act of 2003. She said the Senate introduced and adopted that SJR on Feb. 18, 2004 and Feb. 23, 2004, respectively. She said the House adopted the resolution on March 4, 2004.

Glory to God in the Highest, and on earth Peace, good will toward men.

Luke 2:14

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Sub moves to Guam

SANTA RITA, Guam—The Los Angeles-class fast-attack submarine USS *Jefferson City* arrived at Naval Base Guam last Dec. 16, following a change of homeport from Pearl Harbor, Hawaii.

"The officers and crew of *Jefferson City* are excited for the opportunity to join the Forward Deployed Naval Force at the tip of the spear in Guam," said Cmdr. Robert McDowell, commanding officer, *Jefferson City*.

In 2014, *Jefferson City* arrived in Hawaii from its previous homeport at Naval Base Point Loma, California. Shortly after arriving in Hawaii, the submarine conducted a regularly-scheduled maintenance availability for upgrades and repairs and deployed to the Indo-Pacific area of operations.

"We are honored to welcome *Jefferson City* to Guam and the 7th Fleet area of operations," said Capt. Bret Grabbe, commodore, Submarine Squadron 15. "This homeport change continues our focus to bring our most capable submarines to theater with the greatest amount of striking power and operational capability to bear in the timeliest manner."

Jefferson City was commissioned Feb. 29, 1992 and is the only ship of her name in the United States Navy. Measuring 360 feet long and displacing more than 6,900 tons, *Jefferson City* has a crew of approximately 140 sailors. (PR)

A Christmas Wish for Blessing

*Andrea and I and our family,
Wish that on this Christmas
Our Lord bless you,
And keep you;
Wish that He make his face shine upon you,
And be gracious to you;
Wish that our Lord lift up His countenance upon you,
And give you peace both now
And for 2022.
Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!*

Based on Numbers 6:24-26

Kilili, Andrea and family

Power service outage on Dec. 27 and 28

There will be scheduled power service interruptions on Dec. 27 and 28, 2021.

MONDAY, DEC. 27, 2021

- Outage Time: 8:30am to 12:30pm
- Areas Affected: None
- Momentary Outage: 8:30am to 9am and 12pm to 12:30pm
- Areas Affected: • San Vicente (Kahida Pl., Laulau Bay Drive, Achon Ln., Railroad Dr., Sinagu Ln., Tininu Pl., Galak Dr., Makpong Pl., and Pacific Heights Ln.)
- Papago (Palai Way, Mulberry Ln., Lantana Pl., Mapga Ln., Langit Ln., Berbena Dr., Pakko Ln., Golondrina Dr., Nifen Ln., and Tangan Tangan Dr.).
- Purpose: To perform replace a rotted primary wooden power pole along Isa Drive in Papago.
- Circuit: Kiya 1

- Water Well(s) Affected: None
- Wastewater Facility Affected: None

TUESDAY, DEC. 28, 2021

- Outage Time: 9am to 11am
- Area Affected: Kaman 3 (Kagman Road, Gabgab Dr., Ulo Way, Gaogao Drive, Gaogao Ct., Gagu St., Gagu Lp., and Nonnak Av.).
- Purpose: To perform systems maintenance by replacing a rusted power pole hardware along Gaogao Drive in Kagman 3.
- Circuit: Feeder 4
- Water Well(s) Affected: KG-10, KG-11, KG-12, and KG-13. Water services to Kagman, Papago, San Vicente, Upper Dandan and Obyan areas may be affected based on tank level.
- Wastewater Facility Affected: None (**PR**)



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Opinion

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EDITORIAL



Better rebuild: On Joe Manchin and the demise of Build Back Better

A boo and a hiss to Sen. Joe Manchin, who for the indefinite future has buried Build Back Better in a shallow grave, proclaiming himself unpersuadable, despite months in which President Biden and other Democrats bent over backward to negotiate with him and craft the bill more to his liking. If he doesn't return to the bargaining table, he may have just made it easier for the execrable Donald Trump to win a second term.

But Democrats, including Biden, angry at Manchin for betraying their best chance at pushing through a transformative policy agenda—including important advances like paid family leave, a dramatic expansion in free pre-K, hearing benefits under Medicare and lower-cost prescription drugs—should save some ire for Republicans, who said hell no from day one, and for their own strategists.

For months, Democrats wasted energy on a debate over whether to connect Build Back Better to a bipartisan infrastructure bill, with progressives insisting that the two had to move in lockstep, lest they lose leverage over centrist Democrats. Now, the likes of Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez are crowing that the gargantuan bill's demise proves they were right all along.

To the contrary, the country is far better off having passed the infrastructure bill, and there's no way Manchin's concerns about spending would have been allayed if the fate of the two packages had been fused. This never should've been a choice between everything and nothing.

Democrats also likely erred by cramming almost all of Biden's domestic policies into a single huge box. Nothing would have been wrong with three, four or more bills: one enhancing child care, one improving health care, one investing in climate change resiliency, and so on. Perhaps it would've been harder for Manchin to naysay them all in succession.

Members of the party in power can grouse all they like about the fact that in the 50-50 Senate, Democrats represent 41 million more Americans than Republicans do. But they knew they needed 50 votes, and they didn't get there. That's on them.

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Look before you leap when it comes to holiday charitable donations

This is the season for giving to charities—and maybe throwing your money away.

Let's assume that most charities are good. They're sincere, effective and legitimate. But too many are inefficient, self-serving or even fake.

Too often, donors are filling the pockets of professional fundraisers rather than helping the needy or a worthy cause. The donation becomes a lump of coal.

"We try to assure that charitable money goes to help people instead of being misdirected to noncharitable purposes—like into the personal bank accounts of board members," says state Atty. Gen. Rob Bonta. "We're talking about millions of dollars."

Many charities net 80% to 90% or even more of the donations collected by their paid fundraisers. But many also receive as little as 5% to 25%—or worse. Some even end up owing a fundraiser money because overhead exceeds the amount collected.

"Operation costs shouldn't be more than 50%," Bonta says.

I'd say 35% tops. If more than 35 cents of my dollar are going into a fundraiser's wallet, count me out.

The attorney general each year prepares a lengthy report on charitable fundraisers. It shows how much they collect—and how much they turn over to the charity or keep themselves.

Bonta recently went on a little-noticed statewide tour warning the public about scammers while promoting local reputable charities.

"Fraudulent organizations are always seeking to capitalize on people's desire to help," he cautioned.

"Do your research before giving. Find out how the charity spends its donations. How much is spent directly on the charitable cause? How much goes to overhead and employee compensation?"

Yeah, right!

You can waste your breath pumping a phone solicitor for answers. Or call the charity and curse while waiting on hold.

Or click onto the attorney general's website and fumble around for the "Summary of Charitable Solicitation Campaigns Conducted by Professional Fundraisers." And if you find it, dig into the 271 pages.

But more likely, you're too harried with the holidays. Moreover, you don't have much time left to send out charitable donations before Jan. 1 so they can be deducted on 2021 income tax returns.

So, you wing it.

The attorney general's report shows the total amount of donations collected nationally by fundraisers soliciting in California. Most charities don't use independent fundraisers, the attorney

By GEORGE SKELTON

Los Angeles Times



Political columnist George Skelton has covered government and politics for nearly 60 years and for *The Los Angeles Times* since 1974.

general's office says. So, the report provides only a partial picture. But those fundraisers surveyed collected slightly more than \$1 billion in 2020, up \$220 million over 2019.

The good news is that charities overall received 82% of the haul, 3.4% higher than in 2019 and 13.2% more than five years earlier.

A major reason for charities scoring bigger cuts and donors kicking in more money is that increasing numbers of people are contributing online. There's less overhead soliciting electronically than by phone or mail. And it's easier for a donor than writing a check and mailing it. At least for younger generations.

Among my frustrations are the harassing phone calls from solicitors.

"If you feel pressured or threatened just hang up," Bonta said. I hang up anyway. Get off my phone line!

Another gripe is that charities are never satisfied. Even if I give in December, I'm pestered every month in perpetuity. They clog my mailbox all year long. I trash the junk.

Some me send nickels or dimes—even an occasional dollar? Ridiculous. I pocket it and toss the envelope. If they can afford to mail money to millions of people, they don't need my \$50.

Actually, \$50 barely pays for a solicitation. So, to recoup that expense, the charity sells my address, phone number and personal information to other solicitors. That's why I get pleas from outfits that I've never heard of. Hate that, too.

The shady charities often use seductive words in their titles such as "cancer," "veterans," "firefighters" and "children." They're leeching off legitimate charities.

In January, then-Atty. Gen. Xavier Becerra and other attorneys general across the country pounced on a group called Healing Heroes that falsely advertised it used 100% of its donations to help wounded veterans. It really was spending only 16% on vets. The deceivers were shut down and forced to pay \$95,000 to a legitimate veterans charity.

Some of the worst short-changing fundraisers collect money See LOOK on next page

Have a very merry eco-friendly and safe Christmas

From buying and wrapping gifts to decorating your home and planning your holiday feasts, you'll be surprised to learn that you can have an eco-friendly Christmas and New Year. Because we live on an island surrounded by nature, let's consider how we can go green while we celebrate.

For example, my family and I have made some shifts in how we decorate. We went from using disposable plastic table covers to using banana leaves to cover our tables. We go into our garden to pick flowers and fruits to adorn the table. Once our decoration pieces are in place, we would then gather around to share about our daily lives. I love to share the history of the Marianas with my children and grandchildren in hopes that they will remember noteworthy events and share them with anyone who will listen. Our children must know the struggles that have shaped our home and history. This will always be my most treasured family tradition.

Another way to stay eco-friendly is wrapping gifts with recycled paper or fabric instead of gift bags or wrapping paper. Yearly, tons of trash fill our landfills and most of it is paper products. When paper rots, it releases methane, a greenhouse gas, and when paper burns, it releases carbon dioxide. A won-



GOVERNOR'S COUNCIL OF ECONOMIC ADVISERS

derful thing about using recycled paper or fabric is the aesthetic of how you can present a gift. It adds a creative touch that amplifies the sentiment.

As we feast during the holidays, we all know we're bound to *balutan* and pack food to take home from family gatherings. This time around, let's skip the foil and plastic cling wrap and bring our containers with us. Another way to avoid food waste is

to be mindful of how much you cook and pour on your plate. It's better to go for seconds than to waste food that someone else can enjoy.

For those who don't celebrate Christmas, you start a new tradition and plant trees for the holidays. The annual planting of coconut trees will go a long way because coconuts can be used in many ways. From producing highly nutritious seeds, oils, tonics, and beverage ingredients, coconuts can also provide landscape, construction, and furniture materials, fiber, coir, and medicinal contents. Fruits like coconuts allow for healthy and organic eating and as we continue to battle COVID-19, we must maintain healthy lifestyles.

As we celebrate the holidays, let's continue to practice the three W's—wash your hands, wear your mask, and wait at a dis-

A world-class destination needs a world-class Universal Garbage Collection system

Last week's Trash Talk column discussed how trash is everybody's business. Similarly coined is the Marianas Visitors Authority's core message: Tourism is everybody's business. Littering and illegal dumping have, and continue to, affect our tourism product, our industry, and our destination. In many ways, our stake as a community to do something about our garbage issues will directly impact our tourism industry, our main economic driver.

The Marianas Visitors Authority is mandated by law to promote the Marianas. In addition to promoting our unique cultures, traditions, and history, the MVA also promotes the pristine and treasured sites throughout the Marianas such as the Grotto, Mañaga Island, House of Taga, Chenchun Bird Sanctuary, and our beaches. These are our natural wonders that must be preserved, maintained, and actively protected. Everyone—residents and visitors—are equally responsible for upholding our islands and ensuring that it is kept clean and free of litter.

Unfortunately, as we may have all experienced firsthand, many of our tourist sites suffer from litter caused either by insufficient garbage bins or complete neglect. People who use the sites do not take responsibility for properly disposing of their trash. Uncontrolled waste disposal and floating debris in our beaches are visible threats to our islands' reputation as a clean destination.



By DAVID M. APATANG
Special to the Saipan Tribune

David M. Apatang is mayor of Saipan in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

Christmas message 2021

This Christmas let us show our heartfelt gratitude to all of our active service members, first responders, frontline essential workers, and all those who are on call, working throughout the holidays to keep us safe.

Despite the many challenges we have faced, there are many reasons for us to be hopeful and inspired. Our people have demonstrated their generosity and willingness to protect others, especially those who are vulnerable. We all had to find a new inner strength to carry us through these difficult times. We are blessed to see how our community spirit in our wonderful island grows stronger. Let us continue to hope and believe that better times are ahead as we move into the new year, and regardless of what the future holds for us, always remember to support one another.

May our Lord continue to bless us, stay safe, and have a very Merry Christmas and a prosperous New Year!

Our visitors look forward to experiencing a tropical climate destination that is safe and clean. If the Marianas continues to mishandle its garbage, we could lose our position as a premier destination of choice. Consequently, our visitor arrivals will decrease, businesses will close, investors will be driven away, unemployment rates would rise, and ultimately, our people will suffer.

The MVA supports and sees the benefits of having a Universal Garbage Collection system throughout the Marianas. A UGC program will support the vision of transforming our islands into world-class destinations. With UGC, we would be able to better preserve our natural treasures and keep them clean for all to explore and enjoy. We would help save our precious marine life by keeping garbage out of the ocean and responsibly recycling materials. We would create a safer environment for all to live in and visit by responsibly keeping garbage from contaminating our natural resources.

UGC will help make tourism more sustainable. The countless benefits pave a path to improving our economy while also improving our quality of life. Having a clean and beautiful environment will also make the Marianas a better place to live. I commend the Governor's Council of Economic Advisers and its Public Private Partnership program for inspiring the community to take ownership and action. The PPP partners who clean and

This is my first Christmas in Micronesia, and we are so grateful to everyone we've had the pleasure of meeting over the past few months. Additionally, I'm personally grateful for the opportunity to serve our country from the Indo-Pacific region.

This year, as a community, we have overcome a number of major challenges, and we've made a tremendous amount of progress in the fight against COVID-19. It is absolutely essential that we take the time to recognize all of our frontline workers for their continued dedication. I also encourage everyone to do their part and get vaccinated so we can look forward to more holidays spent with our loved ones.

LOOK
From Page 12

for public safety charities. Bonta reported that several worthy-sounding police and fire organizations received only small cuts from their solicitors.

They included the California Fraternal Order of Police, Firefighters Charitable Foundation, Irvine Police Assn., Volunteer Firefighters Alliance, California Police Youth Charities and National Assn. of Chiefs of Police. All received just 20% or less of the money that was donated to them.

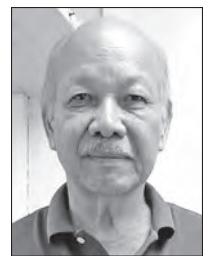
Also on that list were the Autism Spectrum Disorder Foundation, Veterans Support Foundation, American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, Childhood Leukemia Assn.

TOGETHER, WE CAN

By HERMAN B. CABRERA

Special to the Saipan Tribune

Herman B. Cabrera has been an architect for 45 years and is a member of the American Institute of Architects. He has led major projects in the Marianas, such as the revitalization of the Kalabera Cave in Marpi, the Kiosku building, the Japanese Lighthouse building, and multiple building projects in the CNMI Public School System.



tance, and avoid the three C's—closed, crowded, and close-range spaces. Our health is more important than partying. This year, we can find ways to celebrate the holidays more mindfully while protecting our health and the environment. Both will ultimately contribute to returning us to normalcy so we can reopen our tourism industry and get our people back to work.

Felis pugua yan magof año nuevo from my family to yours!

For more information, visit the GCEA at cnmieconomy.com, on Facebook and Instagram (@cnmigov.economy), or contact them at gceacnmi@gmail.com.

TRASH TALK

By PRISCILLA MARATITA IAKOPO

Special to the Saipan Tribune



Priscilla Maratita Iakopo is the managing director of the Marianas Visitors Authority. She leads the promotion and development of the Northern Mariana Islands as a premier destination of choice for visitors around the world while providing a maximum quality of life for the people of the Marianas.

transform our sites need a UGC infrastructure to help keep the parks and beaches free of debris. Community volunteers work proudly to keep the villages and streets clean, but they too, see the benefit of a UGC program. It all works together for the betterment of our community.

Building the Marianas to become a world-class destination will require a partnership among all who call the islands home. We need to improve how garbage is handled throughout the Commonwealth, because we know what's at stake—our priceless natural treasures that are our livelihood and our home. UGC is right for the Marianas. It's time for us to take the next step for our future.

For more information about the Universal Garbage Collection initiative, visit the GCEA website at cnmieconomy.com. Engage with the UGC Task Force via email at gceacnmi@gmail.com.

Holiday greetings to friends, community partners

By BENJAMIN NICHOLSON

Special to the Saipan Tribune



Rear Adm. Benjamin Nicholson is commander, Joint Region Marianas.

Additionally, my heartfelt thanks goes out to all our service members and civilian employees who are doing the job of defending the region each and every day. To those of you standing duty on Christmas Day or New Year's Eve, or any other holiday—thank you for keeping watch over the rest of us.

From my family to yours, we wish you a safe and enjoyable holiday season, and a prosperous New Year.

and United Cancer Support Foundation.

At the upper end, these charities received at least 90% of their donations: Everytown for Gun Safety, Food for the Poor, Habitat for Humanity International, Save the Children Federation, International Fellowship of Christians & Jews, Leukemia & Lymphoma Society and Sierra Club.

The safest bet is to donate directly to local charities whose work you can observe.

I give mostly to a journalism scholarship fund at the Sacramento Press Club. I know 100% of my donation goes to a promising student who needs it.

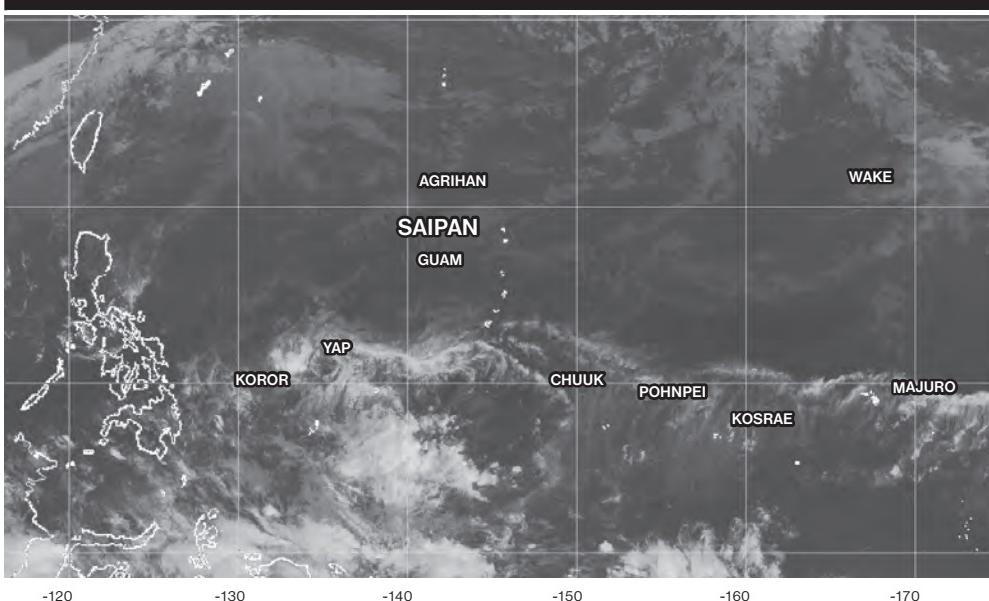
But for charities that spend less than 65 cents of the donated dollar as advertised—or flood my mailbox and call incessantly—bah, humbug.

The Weather

5-DAY FORECAST FOR SAIPAN AND TINIAN

TODAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY
Breezy. Partly sunny with scattered showers. Northeast winds 20 to 25 mph.	Breezy at times. Mostly cloudy. Scattered showers. East to Northeast winds 15 to 25 mph.	Mostly cloudy with scattered showers.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.
86°	75°	87°	76°	85°
75°	85°	75°	75°	85°
75°	85°	75°	85°	75°

YESTERDAY'S SATELLITE IMAGE



PICTURE TIME: 7:38 AM, THURSDAY, DECEMBER 23, 2021

Western North Pacific between equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

Fair weather prevails with moderate northeast trade winds and isolated light showers. Satellite shows a decaying frontal boundary draped across the far northern Mariana Islands. Ipan buoy shows seas a bit under 5 feet with altimetry pegging seas of 6 feet to our east.

Satellite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam homepage: www.prh.noaa.gov/guam/

STOP THE SPREAD

The Governor's COVID-19 Task Force and Commonwealth Healthcare Corp. continue to encourage residents within the Marianas to practice social distancing, which means avoiding close contact with people in order to avoid catching the virus yourself and to avoid passing it on to others.

If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.

- Avoiding touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.
- Limiting visitors



Stay home as much as possible. Avoid unnecessary travel or public places.

Avoid social gatherings in groups of more than 10.

Choose drive-thru, take-out, or delivery options, or outdoor seating, if available, when dining in.

Send only one healthy adult from the household run necessary errands, such as getting groceries or picking up medications. Leave children, elderly, and other vulnerable people at home as much as possible. When returning home from an errand, wash your hands before doing anything else.

Older adults and people with chronic medical conditions are at higher risk of getting very sick from this illness. People at high risk should stay at home as much as possible.

Create a household plan of action, <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-nCoV/prepare/checklisthousehold-ready.html>

Ensure a 30-day supply of all medicines.

Continue good hand hygiene

Wash your hands for at least 20 seconds with soap and water, avoid touching your face, cover coughs and sneezes with a tissue or your sleeve.

Use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer if soap and water are not readily available.

Know the signs and symptoms of COVID-19 and what to do if you become symptomatic

Stay home when you are sick and if you recently traveled to a place with COVID-19. Self-quarantine means:

Choosing a room in your house that can be used to separate sick household members from others.

Washing your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 sec-

onds. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.

- Avoiding touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.
- Limiting visitors

CHCC appreciates the patience and understanding of the community at this time. To obtain general information about the CNMI COVID-19 response, contact the Governor's COVID-19 Task Force Hotline at 287-0046, 287-0489, 287-1089. These numbers are available Monday to Sunday, 7:30am - 4:30pm.

For medical information about COVID-19, reach out to the COVID-19 InfoLine at the following numbers: 285-1672/1352. These numbers are available Monday to Friday, 7:30am - 4:30pm.

For mental health support and helpful tips during a crisis, call the Mental Health Support Line at 285-1856, 323-6560, 323-6561. These numbers are available Monday to Friday, 7:30am - 4:30 pm. For the 24/7 Disaster Distress Helpline, call SAMSHA at 1-800-985-5990.

For more information about DIY face coverings, visit <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-nCoV/prevent-getting-sick/cloth-face-cover.html>

For more information about CHCC programs, follow CHCC on Facebook, Instagram, Twitter at @cnmichcc, check out our website at www.chcc.gov.mp or call us at (670) 234-8950.

For more information on the Governor's COVID-19 Task Force, visit www.governor.gov.mp, follow @GovernorCNMI on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter.

This health advisory may be found online at <http://www.chcc.gov.mp/pressrelease.html> and at www.governor.gov.mp/covid-19.

Source: Office of the Governor

NEWS DESK For news tips, corrections and requests for news coverage, call (670) 235-NEWS (6397), 235-2440, fax 235,3740. E-mail: editor@saipantribune.com. Website: www.saipantribune.com.

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ADVERTISING For inquiries contact (670) 235-2769. E-mail: sales@saipantribune.com

MICRONESIA		
Guam and Rota	Thunderstorms	86° / 79°
Palau	Thunderstorms	83° / 77°
Yap	Partly Cloudy	86° / 79°
Chuuk	Thunderstorms	87° / 81°
Pohnpei	Partly Cloudy	86° / 79°
Kosrae	Partly Cloudy	86° / 79°
Majuro	Partly Cloudy	85° / 81°

DAY	SUNRISE	SUNSET
Today	6:39 AM	5:53 PM
Saturday	6:40 AM	5:53 PM
Sunday	6:40 AM	5:54 PM
Monday	6:40 AM	5:54 PM
Tuesday	6:41 AM	5:55 PM

DAY	MOONRISE	MOONSET	MOONRISE
Today	-	10:25 AM	10:10 PM
Saturday	-	11:05 AM	11:02 PM
Sunday	-	11:44 AM	11:53 PM
Monday	-	12:22 PM	-
Tuesday	12:45 AM	1:01 PM	-

AROUND THE GLOBE		
Auckland	Partly Cloudy	75° / 63°
Beijing	Sunny	45° / 21°
Hong Kong	Sunny	68° / 57°
Honolulu	Showers	81° / 70°
London	Mostly Cloudy	52° / 46°
Los Angeles	Partly Cloudy	61° / 44°
Manila	Partly Cloudy	84° / 75°
Melbourne	Sunny	75° / 55°
Miami	Partly Cloudy	79° / 68°
New York	Partly Cloudy	45° / 30°
Osaka	Mostly Sunny	50° / 36°
Paris	Partly Cloudy	45° / 43°
Busan	Sunny	48° / 28°
Rome	Partly Cloudy	48° / 30°
Salem	Mostly Cloudy	68° / 60°
San Francisco	Partly Cloudy	52° / 42°
Seoul	Partly Cloudy	34° / 19°
Tokyo	Partly Cloudy	48° / 37°
Washington, DC	Mostly Cloudy	49° / 31°

TIDES: SAIPAN HARBOR TODAY FEET		
4:40 AM	Low Tide	-0.33
12:09 PM	High Tide	1.64
5:49 PM	Low Tide	1.10
9:53 PM	High Tide	1.41

FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF NOVEMBER 12, 2021

DEPARTURES			
SAIPAN-GUAM (GUM)			
UA117	7:20am	8:05am	2, 4, 6
UA117	9:50am	10:35am	1, 3, 5, 7
GUAM-MANILA (MNL)			
UA183	8:00pm	9:50pm	Daily
SAIPAN-MANILA (MNL)			
UA117/183	7:20am	9:50pm	2, 4, 6 via Guam
UA117/183	9:50am	9:50pm	1, 3, 5, 7 via Guam
SAIPAN-INCHEON (ICN)			
7C3406	3:10PM	6:55PM	6
TW9308	3:20PM	8:00PM	4, 5
OZ6243	4:00PM	7:40PM	6
INCHEON (ICN)-SAIPAN			
7C3405	8:30AM	2:10PM	6
OZ6233	9:00AM	2:30PM	6
TW9307	10:00AM	2:20PM	4, 5

LEGEND: Days: Monday (1), Tuesday (2), Wednesday (3), Thursday (4), Friday (5), Saturday (6) and Sunday (7); UA United Airlines • ETD: Estimated Time of Departure; ETA: Estimated Time of Arrival. (The Saipan Tribune is not responsible for any changes in the schedule.)

STAR MARIANAS AIR, INC.

FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF MAY 18, 2021

SAIPAN TO ROTA			

EDA awards OPD \$1M grant

Gov. Ralph DLG Torres announced Thursday that the U.S. Economic Development Administration has awarded \$1 million to the CNMI Office of Planning and Development under the CNMI Office of the Governor.

The money will be used for CNMI initiatives for economic revitalization, recovery, and growth, and support work that builds on the CNMI's Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy priorities and ongoing Comprehensive Sustainable Development Plan implementation efforts to enable the CNMI to assess and implement opportunities to diversify the economy and invest in critical planning and capacity building needs.

Through EDA's Statewide Planning Grant Program, under the American Rescue Plan Act, states and territories may avail of funding to plan for economic recovery and prepare to build back better. The award will support long-term sustainability planning efforts that align with EDA investment priorities through implementation of the following three planning support components: (1) economic recovery and feasibility carry capacity study; (2) economic recovery planning

education assessment, training, and incubator integration, and (3) socio-economic planning liaison for project management, coordination, and capacity building.

"We are thankful for this opportunity provided by the EDA, as well as their continued partnership. This award will help our Commonwealth as we continue to recover from the effects of not only this pandemic, but also the major typhoons that we have faced in the past several years," said Torres. "Through aligning the use of this award with OPD's existing plans for development and economic revitalization, we are mapping a way forward through the economic impacts of this pandemic by reassessing and reinvesting in the CNMI's critical socio-economic systems."

OPD director Kodep Ogumoro-Uludon said: "The additional data collection, analysis, and comprehensive planning support made possible through this award will help the CNMI build resiliency to ongoing stressors and shocks highlighted by the COVID-19 pandemic while allowing us to continue progress toward our sustainable development objectives." (PR)



Torres



For more information and reservation, please call +1 670 234 1234 ext. 26.

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The gift of love. The gift of peace.
The gift of happiness.
May all these be yours at Christmas.

Merry Christmas

From the management and staff of
JOETEN ENTERPRISES INC.



This Season of Giving, let our homes be filled
with laughter, happiness, and hope.

Though we celebrate from a distance, may our hearts be filled
with faith, joy, and love for one another.

*Merry Christmas and Happy Holidays,
Marianas!*

Governor Ralph DLG. Torres and Senator Vinnie F. Sablan





How to gather safely during the holidays



WEAR A MASK

Everyone 2 years or older should wear a mask in indoor public places.

Choose masks that:

- Have two or more layers of breathable fabric
- Completely cover your nose and mouth
- Fit snugly against the sides of your face and don't have gaps
- Have a nose wire to prevent air from leaking out of the top of the mask

Consider using a KN95 mask, if possible. Learn more at www.staysafecnmi.com/livecovidsafe.



[@cnmichcc](#) | www.chcc.gov.mp

Grand Christmas Raffle 2

1ST PRIZE



3 PC SOFA SET

3RD PRIZE



DRESSING TABLE

1ST PRIZE



5 PC COUNTER HEIGHT DINING SET

3RD PRIZE



6 FT FOLDING TABLE AND 4 FOLDING CHAIRS

EXTENDED

ENTER TO WIN PRIZES

HAVE A CHANCE TO WIN EXCITING PRIZES FROM
KFC AND TACO BELL FOR EVERY SINGLE
FOOD PURCHASE WORTH \$25 OR MORE!

HAVE A CHANCE TO WIN AMAZING PRIZES FOR EVERY
\$100 SPENT AT TOWN HOUSE FURNITURE AND APPLIANCES!

PROMO PERIOD: OCTOBER 22 TO DECEMBER 31, 2021 | RAFFLE DRAWING: JANUARY 1, 2022 @ 5:00 PM

Merry Christmas Saipan!



KFC



TACO BELL



Town House
Furniture and Appliances

Water service interruption in Fina Sisu on Wednesday

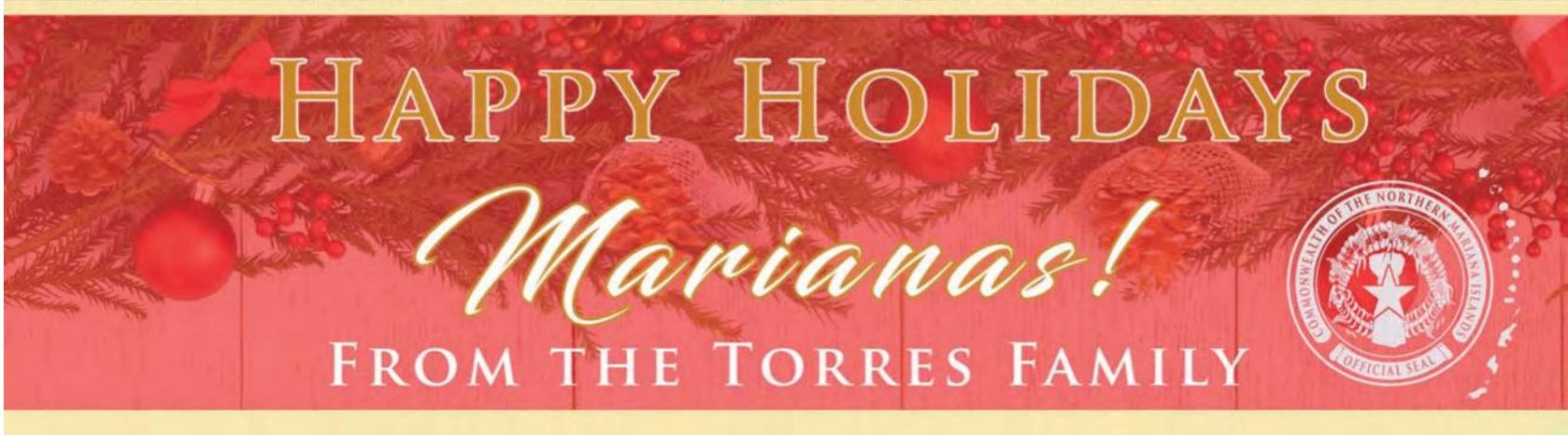


There will be a scheduled water service interruption on Wednesday, Dec. 29, 2021, from 8am to 5pm for customers in the Fina Sisu village along Tun Antonio Apa Road and Tun Joaquin Doi Road.

The scheduled water service interruption is to allow CUC's contractor for the Fina Sisu Waterline Replacement Project to perform the tapping and connection of the new 8-inch waterline at Tun Antonio Apa Road. Customers may experience low water pressure to no water. Water service to the affected areas will resume soon after the connection.

This project is part of the Fina Sisu Waterline Replacement Project to provide a more reliable water system to the people of the CNMI. It is funded by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

The Commonwealth Utilities Corp. continues to work diligently to minimize any inconvenience to its customers. For more information, contact the CUC Customer Hotline (236-4333) or monitor our Facebook page for the latest updates (<https://www.facebook.com/CommonwealthUtilitiesCorporation/>). (PR)



Daniel I. Aquino Jr.
Executive Director

**OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS
MUSEUM
OF HISTORY
& CULTURE**

May your Christmas sparkle with moments of love, laughter, and good will. And may the year ahead be full of contentment and joy.

Have a very Merry Christmas!



Stay safe CNMI!



TRIP sees cancellations due to COVID-19

By KIMBERLY B. ESMORES
kimberly_esmores@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The spread of the new omicron variant of COVID-19 has resulted in a “concerning” number of tourists participating in the Marianas Visitors Authority’s Travel Investment Resumption Plan have cancelled their bookings.

Although the MVA declined to cite specific numbers, MVA deputy managing director Judy Torres said the number is concerning enough that the MVA board will need to revisit TRIP “to evaluate what changes may be needed to continue to support the continued revival of tourism and job security for the community.”

When pressed on how many cancellations have there been, Torres said she could not provide that information. “This is hard to track so I am unable to provide this information,” she told *Saipan Tribune*.

Back in October, however, MVA had expected to generate a total of 7,794 TRIP participants through the end of the year via the South Korean travel bubble. Unfortunately, as of Dec. 16, the CNMI had only served a total of 4,834 TRIP participants from October to Dec. 16.

According to Torres’ breakdown of the 4,834 TRIP participants, the CNMI had a total of 1,983 participants in October, 2,121 in November, and 730 TRIP participants from Dec. 1 to 16.

MVA had already extended the TRIP program from December to the end of January.

“With the successful jumpstart of the Marianas tourism economy through the TRIP program, the outlook for continued gains had been positive for the new year. This includes the anticipated doubling of flights from South Korea to Saipan from three times weekly to six times weekly beginning early January,” Torres said.

In addition, Torres noted Travel Buck incentives will be reduced. “Travel Buck incentives are to be reduced in mid-December from up to \$250-\$500/person per island to \$100/person at a flat rate. Travel Bucks, which can only be spent in the Marianas, are still necessary for the Marianas to remain competitive with competing destinations—like Guam—which are offering similar incentives but to the airlines. We plan to continue to provide PCR tests required for the passenger’s return to Korea,” she said.

**From all of us at
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May this joyous season bring you peace, health,
and happiness throughout the coming year.

Merry Christmas

FROM THE MANAGEMENT & STAFF OF:



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Tan Siu Lin
Foundation

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DYS soon to give gifts to its Saipan, Tinian, Rota clients



Division of Youth Services staff shares a photo with representatives of the Saipan Chamber of Commerce, Associated Students of Northern Marianas College, and several U.S. Marines.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

By JOSHUA SANTOS
joshua_santos@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

With donations from several community partners, the Division of Youth Services under the Department of Community and Cultural Affairs will soon be distributing over 300 gifts to its clients on Saipan, Tinian, and Rota.

DYS director Vivian Sablan explained Wednesday that DYS works with community partners and distributes gifts every year and this year the Saipan Chamber of Commerce and car organizations TeamExotic and the Island Summer Auto Fest made donations to DYS' toy drive.

Sablan said that DYS received the donations on Tues-

day, and that DYS staff has since been sorting the gifts. She added that the Chamber has been a DYS partner for some time now and the two car clubs are recent partners.

Participants in DYS' programs on Saipan, Tinian, and Rota will be getting the gifts, such as participants in the emergency shelter, foster care, Child Protective Services, juvenile probation, and participants in the Parents Anonymous support group.

Sablan said that children at the emergency shelter were the first to get their gifts yesterday, Dec. 23. For DYS' clients on Tinian and Rota, Sablan said the toys will be shipped over soon.

For all other DYS clients on

Saipan, Sablan said that DYS caseworkers will be going to households and personally giving the gifts. She said that DYS will first come up with client lists and sorts gifts based on those lists.

For Rota and Tinian, Sablan said that toys will be distributed during scheduled pickups at community centers on both islands, or through in-person gift deliveries done by DYS staff.

When asked for her thoughts on the large amount of community support for DYS' gift-giving initiative, Sablan said the additional support is "always a blessing" and said that working with partnering agencies allows DYS to better serve its clients.



Division of Youth Services staff shares a photo with representatives of the TeamExotic car club at the Kagman Community Center.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO



Division of Youth Services staff shares a photo with representatives of the Island Summer Auto Fest car club at the Kagman Community Center.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

"It's always a blessing to

have the additional support. What I always tell our partnering agencies, both public and private, is [that] DYS can only do so much, and we know that we are not able to cover so many areas unless we establish these partnerships. This is one good example of a partnership that can bring a lot of joy and [smiles] to the children that we

serve," said Sablan.

Sablan also lauded the CNMI Salvation Army and Tyler's Gelatte Stone for supporting DYS.

Yesterday, the Salvation Army sponsored a Christmas luncheon at the DYS emergency shelter. Sablan said the Salvation Army has been giving gifts through DYS and has been a partner for over five

years now. This year, Salvation Army bought clothing and footwear for the children at the shelter.

Sablan shared that Tyler's Gelatte Stone will be donating 100 cups of gelato to DYS, made possible through an ongoing campaign by the creamery where Tyler's will donate one gelato to DYS for every one sold.



From the staff and management



SAIPAN

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TINIAN MARINE STEVEDORE, INC.
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FAX: 670-322-8568
EMAIL: saisteve@pticom.com

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Latitude 14° 10' N | Longitude 145° 15' E

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FAX: 670-532-9888
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Dashin' for last-minute Christmas shopping

By ERICKA SANTIAGO
ericka_santiago@saipantribune.com
SALES ASSOCIATE

Last year you promised yourself: No more procrastinating on your Christmas shopping. Yet here you are the day before Christmas and you're in another tight spot. But it's okay, it happens. Finding great value gifts under \$25 should not be that hard, right? It won't be if you know where to look.

Here's a guide on where to go around the island and become the pro at last-minute Christmas shopping.

Joeten Susupe Shopping Center offers a lot of options for the people in your life. They have a wide selection of drinking glasses at the back of their store. The prices start at \$10.99. They offer wine glasses, flute glasses, and even margarita glasses if you feel the need to put some fun in their lives. Besides the great value glasses, Joeten has terrific deals for your dad, husband, or any man you need to get a gift for. They have hair clippers that start at \$18.99 and a \$21.95 set that includes a woven tie and a bi-fold leather wallet.

On Christmas day, they are open from 8am to 10pm. For more information, call (670) 234-6446.



\$17.49.
ERICKA
SANTIAGO



Coby Vertex Professional Hair Clipper Kit: \$18.99.
ERICKA SANTIAGO



S&CO HOME flute glasses start at the very low price of \$11.99. Various selections of glassware are available at Joeten Susupe.
ERICKA SANTIAGO



Umo Lorenzo's set of traditional woven tie and bi-fold leather wallet set: \$21.95
ERICKA SANTIAGO

Hot Deals in Garapan offers many gifts for loves ones this Christmas. There is a wide selection of Victoria's Secret lotion and body mist and they are giving 20% discount on all of them. They start at \$18. They currently offer 20% off most clothing, headgear, belts, wallets, backpacks, phone cases, and more. Most of their other merchandise will also be discounted at 10%. For every \$20 spent at their store, you receive a raffle ticket. They are giving away a 55" LG Smart TV. Their raffle draw will be on Dec. 28 at 3pm. Head down there now to get the sweet deals and you just might get lucky and take home the TV as well. They are open every day from 9am to 8pm. For more information, call (670) 233-2758.



Victoria's Secret body mists and lotion will make it hard for you to choose just one.



ERICKA SANTIAGO



Most items in the store are 20% off right now!

ERICKA SANTIAGO

I Love Saipan at Star Sands Plaza has products that cater to the women in your life and their skin needs. Many people come to the store for the clothes and might not know of the range for skin care they offer. As the saying goes, beauty is in the skin! So, it is up to us to take care of it. I Love Saipan has great products that are under \$25. Nature Republic's Polynesia lagoon water hydro essence is going for only \$13.95 and you can also purchase their olive cleansing cream for \$11.95. These are great as a gift because skin care is very important, especially living on a tropical island. Hydrate and protect your loved one's skin this year by also buying their face masks for \$1.95 apiece. They will be open from 10am to 9pm on Christmas Day. For more information, call (670) 233-3535.



I Love Saipan offers many skin care products for all skin types.

ERICKA SANTIAGO



They have a wide range of face masks to choose from.

ERICKA SANTIAGO



Nature Republic's hydro essence (left) and olive cleansing cream (right).

ERICKA SANTIAGO

Visit **T-Market** today to get some deals that won't be available after the holidays. There were many discounts since Black Friday. They have attracted more customers as many have told their friends or colleagues about the store. According to Mitch, a salesperson of T-Market, there are deals all across the shop. "We currently give 50% discount on all our water bottles, 20% discount on all shirts and toys." They are definitely a shop to stop by as they offer so many items from kids to adults.

On Dec. 25, they are open from 10am to 8pm, catering to all the last-minute Christmas shoppers. They are located behind Star Sands Plaza – I Love Saipan. For more information, call (670) 233-6767.



All water bottles are 50% off. They offer many types of sizes and colors.

ERICKA SANTIAGO



T-Market also sells a variety of humidifiers that start at \$19.99.

ERICKA SANTIAGO



Peace, good will, and happiness for you
at Christmas and always.

MERRY
CHRISTMAS

AND HAPPY NEW YEAR



From the management and staff of
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Tel: 322-7415, 322-8733
Fax: 322-7414
Email: wushin2@pticom.com

Off the Wall

OFFBEAT BRIEFS

Tiny house in wealthy Boston suburb sells for \$315,000

NEWTON, Mass. (AP)—A tiny home in a wealthy Boston suburb has sold after about a month on the market, albeit for far less than the original asking price of almost \$450,000. The roughly 250-square-foot (23-square-meter) home in Newton sold on Monday for \$315,000, according to Coldwell Banker Realty's Hans Brings Results agency. The home, on a 0.06-acre lot (0.02 hectares), went on the market in late September. The house built in 1970 is described as an "adorable tiny studio home ... featuring completely open living space," with a loft and "ready to finish basement," and recent renovations including a new bathroom and elec-

trical upgrades. Several unusual homes in the Boston area's hot real estate market have sold for high prices in the past several months. Boston's famous 10-foot-wide Skinny House sold in September for \$1.25 million, and a home gutted by fire in Melrose sold for nearly \$400,000.

Police: Restaurant break-in suspect consumed beer, ice cream

ASHEVILLE, N.C. (AP)—Officers with a North Carolina police department appeared to have no trouble finding the suspect in a break-in, possibly because he had a stomach ache. Asheville police say in a news release that patrol officers apprehended the man who broke into a downtown restaurant on Monday and apparently helped himself to some beer and ice cream. According to a news release, officers responded to a business on Patton Avenue after

a report of a forcible breaking and entering. The officers found open alcohol containers, and after a brief investigation, they found the suspect nearby. The man is charged with two counts of larceny after breaking and entering, felony breaking and entering.

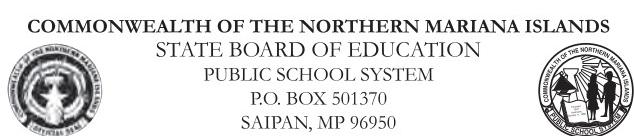
Florida man with drugs around penis denies they were his

CLEARWATER, Fla. (AP)—Florida authorities said they found cocaine and methamphetamine wrapped around a man's penis during a traffic stop, but the man denied the drugs were his. Pinellas County sheriff's deputies said they stopped a vehicle driving without its lights on at 4 a.m. last Saturday. WFLA-TV reports the driver was arrested on charges of DUI and marijuana possession. Authorities said they found a gun under the passenger's seat while searching

the car and discovered the drugs while searching the passenger. The man said the drugs were not his, but didn't say who the drugs belonged to, according to the arrest report.

'Large, pink & elusive' S. Carolina police seek ruinous pig

SUMTER, S.C. (AP)—Authorities in South Carolina are searching for a pig that they say has been "wreaking havoc" in people's yards. On Monday, police in Sumter posted on their Facebook page that the department had received calls over the weekend about a "large, pink and elusive" pig suspected of causing damage in some neighborhoods. Alongside the post were photos of a large pig, as well as large dirt piles the yard of a home. Officers warned people not to try to approach the hefty hog, writing that "its size alone is of concern."



PUBLIC NOTICE

Pursuant to 1 CMC § 9910(a), the Seventeenth CNMI State Board of Education hereby gives notice that there will be a Regular Board Meeting on Tuesday, December 28, 2021 at 9:00 a.m. via zoom. Please see the link below.

AGENDA¹

I. Preliminary

1. Call to Order
2. Roll Call
4. Adoption of Agenda
3. Adoption of Minutes
 - a. April 9, 2021 Regular Board Meeting
 - b. May 7, 2021 Special Board Meeting
 - c. May 21, 2021 Special Board Meeting
 - d. July 8, 2021 Special Board Meeting
 - e. August 6, 2021 Special Board Meeting
 - f. September 1, 2021 Special Board Meeting
 - g. September 17, 2021 Regular Board Meeting
 - h. October 14, 2021 Special Board meeting
 - i. December 7, 2021 Special Emergency Board Meeting

II. Public Comments²

III. Reports

1. Chair's Report
2. Committee Reports
 - a. CIP
 - b. FPA
 - c. ISA
 - d. LIA
 - e. SICPP
 - f. SARC
3. Commissioner of Education
 - a. Financial Status Reports
 - i. Federal
 - ii. Local
 - b. Head Start Program
 - c. Others

IV. Unfinished Business

V. New Business

1. Retention Incentive Payout
2. SY 2020-2021 Annual Report
3. FY 2020 Audit Findings
4. School Opening Plan Protocol
5. Certification & Licensure Matters
 - a. CLO Report No. 2021-17-11

VI. Executive Session³

1. Legal Updates
2. Personnel
3. Other matters

VII. Discussion of Agenda for next Board meeting

VIII. Adjournment

¹<https://zoom.us/j/96769780255?pwd=RU5IaU9PdjhnVnFTSEh-SOHZ3NCsvdz09>
Meeting ID: 967 6978 0255 Passcode: 629721

²In the event that the items on the agenda are not completed, the meeting will recess and reconvene on the following day or at the most expeditious date and time determined by the Board.
³Pursuant to BOE Policy 0415, public comments are limited to 30 minutes. We ask that remarks be limited to 3 minutes each. Everyone is welcomed to submit written comments.
⁴Pursuant to 1 CMC § 9912, the Board may vote to meet in executive session at any time.



AGENDA

*** December 29, 2021 ***

Pursuant to the Open Government Act, Governor Ralph DLG. Torres and Lt. Governor Arnold I. Palacios, through the Commonwealth Casino Commission ("Commission"), hereby give notice that the Commission has scheduled its regular monthly meeting on Wednesday, December 29, 2021 at 10:00 a.m. at the Commission's 2nd Floor Main Conference Room at the Springs Plaza in Gualo Rai, Saipan. However, pursuant to Governor Torres' Executive Orders and Directives on the ongoing threat from the COVID-19 pandemic and limited space available, access to the Commission's meeting will also be available via video conference.

The following Agenda will be discussed:

I. PRELIMINARIES:

- A. Call to Order
- B. Roll Call
- C. Adoption of Agenda
- D. Adoption of Minutes: November 24, 2021

II. PUBLIC COMMENTS

III. REPORTS:

- A. Report by the Chairman
- B. Report by the Executive Director

IV. MISCELLANEOUS MATTERS:

- A. Casino Licensee – Imperial Pacific International (CNMI), LLC ("IPI") – Updates:
 1. Imperial Pacific Resort & Hotel ("IPR"):
 - a. Status of IPI's request for extension of the IGF construction deadline per CLA Amendment #6.
 - b. Status of Tower Cranes 1, 5 and 6 at IPR
 2. IPI Personnel Matters:
 - a. Status of Employee Payroll
 - b. Status of unpaid payroll & severance pay for employees already off-island
 - c. Others
 3. IPI Financial Matters:
 1. Status of IPI's FINAL Annual Audit Report (for the year ended December 31, 2020)
 2. Status of the 2020 & 2021 Annual Exclusive Casino License Fees. Due Aug 12th each year
 3. Status of the 2020 & 2021 Annual Casino Regulatory Fees. Due Oct 1st each year
 4. Other Miscellaneous Matters:
 1. Update on the Writ of Execution (Receivership) — auction of IPI's Gaming Assets

V. OLD BUSINESS – None.

VI. NEW BUSINESS:

- A. Recommended for Approval for a two (2) year Regular Casino Gaming Vendor License.
 1. Aristocrat Technologies Macau, Limited (Aristocrat). Manufacturer and distributor of Electronic Gaming Machines. Provisional License expires on 1/31/2022.

VII. EXECUTIVE SESSION:

- A. Consult with Legal Counsel
- B. Report by the CCC Divisions (Compliance, Audit and Enforcement)
- C. CCC Personnel Matters

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

The Commission reserves the right to amend this Agenda and take action on the amended Agenda pursuant to 1 CMC §9910 (b). Pursuant to 1 CMC §9912 (a)(7) and 1 CMC §9912 (c), the Commission may vote to meet in Executive Session. In addition, the Commission may extend its official meeting for another day or more, if necessary. For those interested in joining or attending the meeting via video conference, please contact the Commission at info@cnmicasinocommission.com for instructions on how to log-in to the conference site.

Edward C. DeLeon Guerrero
Chairman



REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATION STATEMENTS FOR CONSTRUCTION MANAGEMENT SERVICES

FRANCISCO C. ADA/SAI PAN INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT ARFF RAPID REFILL IMPROVEMENTS AIP 3-69-0002-93/XX

The Commonwealth Ports Authority's (CPA) is a public corporation and autonomous agency of the Government of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI). In accordance with its Procurement Rules and Regulations, CPA hereby seeks the services of qualified consulting firms to provide Construction Management Services for the Francisco C. Ada/Sai Pan International Airport ARFF Rapid Refill Improvements Project, AIP 3-69-0002-93/XX.

The project is being funded by U.S. Federal Aviation Administration and is in accordance and compliance with CPA's Procurement Rules and Regulations, Section 40-50-202, Architect-Engineer Design and Construction Management Services.

The Request for Qualification (RFQ) Package is available at CPA's Administration Office, 2nd floor of the arrival terminal at the Francisco C. Ada/Sai Pan International Airport. No fee is required for obtaining the RFQ package. Electronic copies may be made available upon written request to Ms. Angie Aguiqui at angie.aguiqui@cnmiports.com or Ms. Wendi Prater at wprater@cnmiports.com.

Questions regarding this request for qualification statements must be submitted to Ms. Wendi L. Prater, CPA Executive Assistant/Project Manager, via email to wprater@cnmiports.com or hand delivered to the CPA Administration Office by no later than 5:00 p.m. CHST, local time, Monday, December 20, 2021.

The statements of professional qualification will be evaluated based on the criteria available in the RFQ package.

Interested Consultants are requested to submit one (1) original, four (4) copies and one (1) electronic version in .pdf of their statements of professional qualifications no later than **5:00 p.m. CHST, TUESDAY, JANUARY 5, 2022**. Statements of qualification must be presented by a combination of both brochures and the use of current U.S. Government Standard Form 330.

The CPA reserves the right to reject any or all statements of professional qualification for any reason, if in its sole opinion to do so would be in its best interest.

CHRISTOPHER S. TENORIO
Executive Director

Date: December 2, 2021



REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATION STATEMENTS FOR ARCHITECTURAL/ENGINEERING DESIGN SERVICES

FRANCISCO C. ADA/SAI PAN INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT PERIMETER SECURITY FENCE REPLACEMENT PROJECT NO. CPA-SA-002-22 (AIP PENDING)

The Commonwealth Ports Authority's (CPA) is a public corporation and autonomous agency of the Government of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI). In accordance with its Procurement Rules and Regulations, CPA is soliciting statements of professional qualifications from interested Consultants for Architectural and Engineering (A/E) Design Services for the replacement of the perimeter security fencing at the Francisco C. Ada/Sai Pan International Airport, Commonwealth of the Northern Marianas Islands, Project No. CPA-SA-002-22 (AIP pending).

The project is being funded by U.S. Federal Aviation Administration and is in accordance and compliance with CPA's Procurement Rules and Regulations, Section 40-50-202, Architect-Engineer Design and Construction Management Services.

The Request for Qualification (RFQ) Package is available at CPA's Administration Office, 2nd floor of the arrival terminal at the Francisco C. Ada/Sai Pan International Airport. No fee is required for obtaining the proposal package. Electronic copies may be made available upon written request to Ms. Wendi Prater at wprater@cnmiports.com or Ms. Angie Aguiqui at angie.aguiqui@cnmiports.com.

Questions regarding this request for RFQ statements must be submitted to Ms. Prater, CPA's Executive Assistant/Project Manager, via email to wprater@cnmiports.com or hand delivered to the CPA Administration Office by no later than 5:00 p.m. CHST, local time, Monday, December 20, 2021.

The statements of professional qualification will be evaluated based on the criteria available in the RFQ package.

Interested Consultants are requested to submit one (1) original, four (4) copies and one (1) electronic version in .pdf of their statements of professional qualifications no later than **5:00 p.m. CHST, TUESDAY, JANUARY 4, 2022**. Statements of qualification must be presented by a combination of both brochures and the use of current U.S. Government Standard Form 330.

The CPA reserves the right to reject any or all statements of professional qualification for any reason, if in its sole opinion to do so would be in its best interest.

CHRISTOPHER S. TENORIO
Executive Director

Date: December 2, 2021

Science & Technology

Hubble telescope's bigger, more powerful successor to soar

CAPE CANAVERAL, Fla. (AP)—The Hubble Space Telescope's successor is a time-traveling wonder capable of peering back to within a hair's breadth of the dawn of the universe. And it's finally on the brink of flight.

It will be the biggest and most powerful astronomical observatory ever to leave the

planet, elaborate in its design and ambitious in its scope. At a budget-busting \$10 billion, it is the most expensive and also the trickiest, by far, to pull off.

Set to soar after years of delay, the James Webb Space Telescope will seek out the faint, twinkling light from the first stars and galaxies, providing a glimpse into cosmic

creation. Its infrared eyes will also stare down black holes and hunt for alien worlds, scouring the atmospheres of planets for water and other possible hints of life.

"That's why it's worth taking risks. That's why it's worth the agony and the sleepless nights," NASA's science mission chief Thomas Zurbuchen

said in an interview with The Associated Press.

NASA Administrator Bill Nelson said he's more nervous now than when he launched on space shuttle Columbia in 1986.

"There are over 300 things, any one of which goes wrong, it is not a good day," Nelson told the AP. "So the whole thing has got to work perfectly."

Liftoff from the coast of French Guiana in South America was set for Friday but has been postponed for at least a day, until Christmas at the earliest, because of high wind.

The Webb telescope is so big that it had to be folded origami-style to fit into the nose cone of the European Ariane rocket. Its light-collecting mirror is the size of several parking spots and its sunshade the size of a tennis court. Everything needs to be unfolded once the spacecraft is speeding toward its perch 1 million miles (1.6 million kilometers) away.

"We've been waiting a long time for this," said the Massachusetts Institute of Technology's planet hunter Sara Seager.

"email settings." At the left of the screen, click "advanced settings," and under "spam filtering" check the box next to "override security filters."

If you then find that you're getting too much junk mail, try using spam filtering software from another company that can be connected to your Comcast email account (see tinyurl.com/2p8jxkh). Another option is to get a free email account from a provider that's known for accurate spam filtering, such as Google (Gmail) or Microsoft (Outlook.com).

Q: When I print color pictures, I get white lines across the images. I use an Epson Expression Premium XP-640 printer. How can I correct this?

A: You probably need to do

some maintenance work on your printer.

But first try some of the easier ways to make the white lines disappear: Make sure you correctly loaded paper of the right size. Turn off any "high speed" printer settings. Adjust the "print quality" controls. Make sure that the printer has enough ink.

If those things don't help, you'll need to check for a clog in the ink "nozzles" (see tinyurl.com/yey5crnc) or clean the "print head" (see tinyurl.com/mr3eyv4s). If those things don't help, check the "print head alignment" (see tinyurl.com/rtpawr6u). As a last resort (because it uses a lot of ink) try "power cleaning" the printer (see tinyurl.com/yckub896).



TECH Q&A

By STEVE ALEXANDER

Star Tribune

Email tech questions to Steve Alexander at steve.j.alexander@gmail.com. Please include a full name, city and phone number.



This March 5, 2020 photo made available by NASA shows the main mirror assembly of the James Webb Space Telescope during testing at a Northrop Grumman facility in Redondo Beach, Calif. Webb will attempt to look back in time 13.7 billion years, a mere 100 million years after the universe-forming Big Bang as the original stars were forming.

(CHRIS GUNN/NASA VIA AP)

COMMONWEALTH HEALTHCARE CORPORATION
Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands
1 Lower Navy Hill Road Navy Hill, Saipan, MP 96950

PROCUREMENT AND SUPPLY

INVITATION TO BID (ITB)
ITB22-CHCC/EHDP/ELC-CDI-007

SUBMISSION DEADLINE: DECEMBER 27, 2021 TIME: 10:00AM (CHST)

"LEASE OF VEHICLES"

INTERESTED PARTIES CAN DOWNLOAD THIS INVITATION TO BID FROM THE CHCC WEBSITE [WWW.CHCC.GOV.MP]. ONCE AT THE SITE, NAVIGATE TO REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS TAB ON THE LEFT NAVIGATION BAR. CLICK ON THE URL FOR THIS RFP. YOU WILL BE REQUIRED TO ENTER DATA TO ALLOW US TO TRACK ALL REQUESTS FOR THIS OPPORTUNITY.

THE CHCC RESERVES THE RIGHT TO REJECT ANY AND ALL PROPOSAL AND TO WAIVE ANY IMPERFECTIONS IN ANY PROPOSAL, IF TO DO SO SHALL BE IN THE INTEREST OF THE CHCC. ALL PROPOSALS SHALL BECOME THE EXCLUSIVE PROPERTY OF THE COMMONWEALTH HEALTHCARE CORPORATION.

/S/ ESTHER L. MUNA
CHCC CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

/S/ CORA P. ADA
DIRECTOR OF PROCUREMENT & SUPPLY

Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands

OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
Bureau of Environmental and Coastal Quality

Division of Coastal Resources Management
P.O. Box 501304, Saipan, MP 96950
Tel: (670) 664-8300; Fax: (670) 664-8315
www.dcrm.gov.mp

COASTAL RESOURCES MANAGEMENT
Richard V. Salas
Director, DCRM

NOTICE OF CRM PUBLIC HEARING TINIAN AIRPORT PARKING LOT EXPANSION PROJECT PERMIT APPLICATION NO. TMS-97-X-294-A1

The Division of Coastal Resources Management (DCRM) will be holding a public hearing for the proposed expansion of the Tinian International Airport Parking Lot at the Tinian International Airport.

The Commonwealth Ports Authority (CPA) is proposing to expand the existing Tinian Airport Parking lot area to include fifty-five (55) parking stalls, traffic signage, pavement markings, upgrading the ramps, and 100% solar powered parking street lights. The project site is situated on Lot No. T72 T 01/02. The parking lot expansion site measures about 65,056 square feet or 1.49 acres in size.

The public hearing for this project is scheduled on **Tuesday, January 25, 2022, at 5:00PM, at the Tinian Elementary School Cafeteria in San Jose, Tinian.**

Due to the ongoing threat of COVID-19 and to ensure the health and safety of all, virtual public participation is highly encouraged via video conferencing through Zoom link: [https://zoom.us/j\(Meeting ID: 6706648315\)](https://zoom.us/j(Meeting ID: 6706648315)). Our Zoom meeting access code may change so please call the DCRM Permitting Office at (670) 664-8300 for connection assistance at least one-day prior to the public hearing date.

If you are unable to attend, written comments can be submitted to the DCRM Office, Suite 305, Gualo Rai Center, Middle Road, Gualo Rai, Saipan, or mailed to the Division of Coastal Resources Management, P.O. Box 501304, or sent by fax at 664-8315, or by email at ssablan@dcrm.gov.mp. The project files are open for review and comments during business hours of 9:00 A.M. to 3:00 P.M., Monday through Friday. All written and oral comments received by DCRM will be included as part of the permit application records and will be considered in any decisions concerning the proposed projects. Please contact the DCRM at 664-8300/1 if you have any questions or would like to learn more about the Tinian Airport Parking Lot Expansion project.

/s/ Richard V. Salas
Director
Division of Coastal Resources Management

**Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands
PUBLIC SCHOOL SYSTEM**

PUBLIC NOTICE

In accordance with the "Open Government Act" the Public School System State Board of Education, through their Special Education State Advisory Panel (SESAP), is hereby serving notice to the general public that it will hold its **4th Quarter Meeting on Tuesday, December 28, 2021 from 1:00pm to 3:00pm at the SPED Building, Capital Hill, Saipan** and via videoconferencing. This meeting is open to the public, interested individuals are welcome.

AGENDA

- I. Preliminary Matters
 - Roll call
 - Presence of a Quorum
 - Adoption of Agenda
 - Adoption of Minutes
- II. Election of Officers
- III. FFY 2020-2025 State Performance Plan/
Annual Performance Report Requirement
- IV. Miscellaneous
- V. Adjournment

In compliance with the American Disabilities Act (ADA), individuals who wish to attend this meeting, but require accessibility such as larger print or sign language interpreters must call 237-3029/3012. Several days' notice is necessary to allow organizers ample time to make necessary arrangements

/s/ Christina Atalig
Vice-Chairperson
Paid for by IDEA, Part B Funds

/s/ Donna Flores
Director, Special Education Program

Life & Style

Parents of actor Alicia Witt found dead in their home

WORCESTER, Mass. (AP)—The parents of actor Alicia Witt were found dead inside their Massachusetts home by police after she hadn't heard from them in several days and asked a relative to check on them.

The deaths of Robert Witt,

87, and Diane Witt, 75, who were found Monday night, are not considered suspicious, police in Worcester said.

"I reached out to a cousin who lives close to my parents to check on them. Sadly, the outcome was unimaginable," Witt wrote in a statement. "I

ask for some privacy at this time to grieve and to wrap my head around this turn of events, and this surreal loss."

There were reports the couple had been having furnace problems and were using a space heater, police said, but firefighters said there were

no signs of carbon monoxide in the home, The Telegram & Gazette reported.

There were no obvious signs of trauma, police Lt. Sean Murtha said. Autopsies are scheduled.

Witt made her acting debut at age 7 in 1984's "Dune"

and has also appeared in "Orange Is the New Black," "Twin Peaks" and "The Walking Dead."

She is also a classically trained pianist and recording artist whose latest album "The Conduit" was released in the fall.



Witt



The "Pillar of Shame" statue, a memorial for those killed in the 1989 Tiananmen crackdown, is displayed at the University of Hong Kong, Oct. 13, 2021.

Hong Kong university removes Tiananmen massacre statue

HONG KONG (AP)—A monument at a Hong Kong university that commemorates the 1989 Tiananmen Square massacre was removed by workers early Thursday over the objections of its creator from Denmark.

The 8-meter (26-foot) tall Pillar of Shame, which depicts 50 torn and twisted bodies piled on top of each other, was made by Danish sculptor Jens Galschiøt to symbolize the lives lost during the bloody military crackdown on pro-democracy protesters in Beijing's Tiananmen Square on June 4, 1989.

But the statue became an issue of dispute in October, with the university demanding that it be removed, even as the decision drew backlash from activists and rights groups. Galschiøt offered to take it back to Denmark provided he was given legal immunity that he won't be persecuted under Hong Kong's national security law, but has not succeeded so far.

Workers barricaded the monument at the University of Hong Kong late Wednesday night. Drilling sounds and loud clanging could be heard coming from the boarded-up site, which was patrolled by guards.

"No party has ever obtained any approval from the univer-

sity to display the statue on campus, and the university has the right to take appropriate actions to handle it at any time," the university said in a statement Thursday.

"Latest legal advice given to the university cautioned that the continued display of the statue would pose legal risks to the university based on the Crimes Ordinance enacted under the Hong Kong colonial government."

The university said that it had requested for the statue to be put in storage and would continue to seek legal advice on follow-up actions.

In October, the university informed the now-defunct candlelight vigil organizer, the Hong Kong Alliance in Support of Patriotic Democratic Movements of China, that it had to remove the statue following "the latest risk assessment and legal advice."

The organization had said that it was dissolving, citing a climate of oppression, and that it did not own the sculpture. The university was told to speak to its creator instead.

When reached by The Associated Press, sculptor Galschiøt said he was only aware of what was happening to the sculpture Wednesday from social media and other reports.

"We don't know exactly

what happened, but I fear they destroy it," he said. "This is my sculpture, and it is my property."

He had previously written to the university to assert his ownership of the monument, although his requests had gone largely ignored. He has also warned the university that he could seek damages if the statue was damaged during its removal.

Hong Kong authorities have cracked down on political dissent following the implementation of the national security law that appeared to target much of the pro-democracy movement.

The law, which outlaws secession, subversion, terrorism and foreign collusion to intervene in the city's affairs, was imposed by Beijing following months of anti-government protests in 2019.

Over 100 pro-democracy activists have been arrested under the national security law, which has been criticized as rolling back freedoms promised to Hong Kong when it was handed over to China by Britain in 1997.

The Pillar of Shame monument has been erected for over two decades, and initially stood at Hong Kong's Victoria Park before eventually being moved to the University of Hong Kong on a long-term basis.

Relative obsessed with boy's parentage

DEAR ABBY: I am married to a wonderful man who has a teenage son, "Teddy," from a previous relationship. I have no children of my own. I love them both and have no resentments about or issues with having stepped into the role of stepparent.

My issue is one of my relatives. This person will not stop questioning Teddy's legitimacy. There was infidelity in the prior relationship, and a DNA test was never done. While it's true the boy looks mostly like his mother, everyone else can see his resemblance to my husband—except this relative. They constantly harp on how they "just don't see it," how Teddy actually looks like a mutual friend, and that I should demand a DNA test or do one on the sly.

I have tried repeatedly to gently and firmly shut this down by stating that I do see the resemblance and that a DNA test at this point would be pointless because Teddy has been his son for over a decade and it will never change, but they still will not stop. I feel like they somehow think they are "helping" by attempting to relieve us of parental duties, but I SIGNED UP to be a stepmother.

I don't know what this person is thinking or how to get through to them that this is extremely hurtful and damaging and needs to stop. They are starting to be less subtle about it and will say these things when my husband and stepson are in

the next room. Help!

SAD STEPMOM IN ILLINOIS

DEAR STEPMOM: Gladly! Warn this toxic relative that if they mention this subject again, they will no longer be welcome in your home. And if the person persists in trying to cause doubt and pain, I URGE you to follow through!

■ ■ ■

DEAR ABBY: My question concerns my partner's use of Facebook. He spends much of his time on it. He has it on his desk while he's working, looks at it first thing in the morning and throughout the day when he's home on weekends, and for up to 20 minutes before going to bed. I have told him it makes me feel left out and have asked if he can leave it off for a day, but he refuses. He accuses me of "monitoring" him and says it's not my business and he only does it while not busy with something else. However, he will participate in holiday family dinners or when we are watching a movie two or three times a week.

What do others think or do about their partners spending inordinate amounts of time on FB? He's very dismissive of me and my feelings in many other ways, but this is so devaluing. Should I pack my bags?

OVER SOCIAL MEDIA

DEAR ABBY

By ABIGAIL VAN BUREN
FROM UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE

Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Contact Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.



DEAR OVER: Whether your partner is addicted to Facebook (it has happened to others), insensitive or self-centered, I can't opine. But since you mentioned that he's dismissive of your feelings in "many other ways" as well and unwilling to change, explain that you need more attention than he's giving you, and if he cannot compromise, you will be leaving. After that, if nothing changes, act on your ultimatum.

To receive a collection of Abby's most memorable—and most frequently requested—poems and essays, send your name and mailing address, plus check or money order for \$8 (U.S. funds) to: Dear Abby—Keepers Booklet, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. (Shipping and handling are included in the price.)

Brown scores 34 points, Celtics beat Cavaliers, 111-101



BOSTON (AP)— Jaylen Brown scored 34 points and the Boston Celtics beat depleted Cleveland 111-101 on Wednesday night to end the Cavaliers' winning streak at six.

Robert Williams III added a career-high 21 points along with 11 rebounds and seven assists, and Jayson Tatum had 18 points.

"Tonight was taking advantage of the coverage," Boston coach Ime Udoka said about Brown. "He had some big guys on him."

It was Brown's second straight game with 30 points or more.

"It's one of the better days I've had since I've been back," said Brown, who has been out twice with a bothersome right hamstring, including five games this month.

Darius Garland led Cleveland with 28 points, and Kevin Love had 18. The Cavaliers were missing starters Isaac Okoro, Evan Mobley and Jarrett Allen and five other players in the NBA's health and safety protocol.

Also short-handed, Boston signed 40-year-old Joe Johnson to a 10-day contract Wednesday. The crowd chanted "We Want Joe! We Want Joe!" and broke into a loud cheer when he got off the bench and came into the game. He got a huge ovation when he hit a fallaway jumper in the final minute.

Brown remembered idolizing Johnson as a kid.

"A lot of memories," said Brown of watching Johnson play for the Hawks when he was growing up in Atlanta. "A lot of (playoff) runs. In Atlanta, I got to go to a lot of those games."

Down 23 points, the Cavaliers cut it to 10 at 85-75 on Garland's basket—the first of the final quarter—but Williams had a steal and breakaway dunk that sparked the crowd and started an 8-0 spree.

"Just to keep playing," Garland said about the team's situation. "It's next-man-up mentality."

Cavaliers' Lamar Stevens, Dylan Windler, Denzel Valentine, RJ Nembhard and Ed Davis also are in protocol. They missed nine of their first 10 on 3-point attempts. They signed forward Tre Scott from the G League Cleveland Charge to a 10-day contract via the NBA's hardship exception. Garland and Osman were each whistled for a technical.

Celtics' Williams returned to the starting lineup after missing the last game for personal reasons. Udoka said the team is still in a "holding pattern waiting for two negative tests" on the seven players



Boston Celtics' Jaylen Brown, right front, and Cleveland Cavaliers' Dean Wade vie for the ball during the first quarter of an NBA basketball game Wednesday, Dec. 22, 2021, in Boston.

AP

that are in COVID protocol, which includes starting center Al Horford and forward Grant Williams, who plays extended minutes.

Seven-foot-6 center Tacko Fall, who saw limited action the past two seasons with Boston but was a fan favorite, made his first career NBA start due to Cleveland's limited roster. He got a loud ovation when he was introduced,

and there was a spattering of cheers when he did something positive during the game.

"I'm not here, I'm a Cav now," Fall said. "But Boston is always going to mean a lot to me. This is almost like a second home for me. Coming from a different country and my first time being a pro, and how I was embraced here, it's just a place I feel like I can always come back and call it home."

Thunder 108, Nuggets 94

In Oklahoma City, Shai Gilgeous-Alexander had his second career triple-double with 27 points, 11 rebounds and 12 assists to help Oklahoma City beat Denver.

Darius Bazley had 17 points and 11 rebounds, Lu Dort had 15 points and rookie Jeremiah Robinson-Earl added 14 points and nine re-

bounds for the Thunder.

Nikola Jokic had 13 points, seven rebounds and three assists for the Nuggets.

Bucks 126, Rockets 106

In Milwaukee, Jrue Holiday scored 24 points, Khris Middleton added 23 in his return from injury and Milwaukee beat Houston to snap a two-game skid.

Middleton missed three games because of a hyperextended left knee. The two-time All-Star played 28 minutes and had six assists.

The Bucks were missing two-time MVP Giannis Antetokounmpo for a fourth straight game as he remains in the NBA's health and safety protocols along with teammates Bobby Portis and Donte DiVincenzo. Christian Wood led the Rockets with 20 points and 11 rebounds.

Clippers 105, Kings 89

In Sacramento, Calif., Eric Bledsoe scored 19 points and Los Angeles held off Sacramento.

Paul George had 17 points, Serge Ibaka added a season-high 17s, including three dunks and 12 points in the fourth quarter, to help the Clippers end a three-game losing streak.

Tyrese Haliburton had 22 points and a career-high 13 assists for Sacramento.

Magic 104, Hawks 98

In Atlanta, Franz Wagner scored 25 points, Robin Lopez had 10 points and a career-high 11 assists and Orlando beat Atlanta.

Cam Reddish finished with a season-high 36 points, and John Collins had 23 points and 11 rebounds for the Hawks. They have lost seven straight at home.

Doncic in NBA protocols; league postpones 2 more games

By TIM REYNOLDS
AP BASKETBALL WRITER

The list of players currently dealing with the NBA's health and safety protocols climbed toward 100 on Wednesday, as uncertainty continued to mount about the availability of some of the league's biggest names for the Christmas quintupleheader.

Another two games were called off, pushing the total virus-related postponements so far this season to nine. And

a game to go forward.

Through Wednesday evening, based on team injury reports or similar disclosures, there were 96 players from 22 teams dealing with a virus-related issue. It is important to note that players can enter and exit that list quickly in some cases, some teams do not release updated numbers except when mandated by league rule, and not everyone on the list has tested positive for COVID-19.

"This seems like it's changing by the hour," Atlanta coach Nate McMillan said.

The Nets have had each of their last three games postponed—and that means the earliest they would play again is Saturday, when they're scheduled to visit the Lakers in the fourth game on the Christmas slate.

"You just don't know what's going to happen, who it's going to affect, how it's going to affect somebody, the amount of time you will be out due to your health, what you're feeling, the symptoms," Anthony said. "And then on the other hand, some people don't have symptoms. You don't know what to do right now. I think that's the frustrating part for everybody."

Wednesday's Toronto at Chicago game was postponed, as was Thursday's Brooklyn at Portland game. The NBA said neither the Raptors nor the Nets have enough eligible players; by league rule, teams must have at least eight healthy players in uniform for

The Nets have what is believed to be a league-high 10 players in the health and safety protocols, a list that includes Kevin Durant, James Harden and—even though he has yet to play this season—Kyrie Irving.

The 10 teams scheduled to play on Christmas—the games are Atlanta at New York, Boston at Milwaukee, Golden State at Phoenix, the Nets at the Lakers and the Mavericks at Utah—had a combined 44 players in the protocols as of early Wednesday evening.

"Obviously, teams around

the league are really severely getting impacted and games are getting postponed," Miami guard Duncan Robinson said. "It's kind of unsurprising, in that this is the chaos that we've kind of come to expect over this last, whatever it's been, year-and-a-half or something like that."

Atlanta listed six players as being in the protocols on Wednesday, including guard Trae Young. Milwaukee's Giannis Antetokounmpo, the reigning NBA Finals MVP, also remained listed as out for the Bucks' game on Thursday at Dallas, which would suggest there's no guarantee he can play on Christmas either.

Doncic has been ruled out of Thursday's Dallas-Milwaukee game, along with five other Mavericks for health and safety reasons—including Trey Burke, who revealed earlier this season that he is unvaccinated. Dallas is scheduled to face Utah on Christmas.

"We want to do what we can to keep the business going, but also keep our families safe and do our part," Suns coach Monty Williams said. "It doesn't seem like the virus is going anywhere, so we might as well do what we can to keep each other safe."

Teams are being allowed to sign players to replace those sidelined by positive tests, and at least 40 such hardship contracts—which won't count against a team's salary cap or luxury tax numbers—have been executed in the last few days. Among those signed:

Joe Johnson, who was still 19 when drafted by the Boston Celtics in 2001 and now, as a 40-year-old, is a member of the Celtics once again.

Johnson, who last appeared in the NBA in 2018, was signed to a 10-day deal by the Celtics without even being brought in for a workout. He said he knew it was possible that a team would call, given

all the short-term needs that many have right now.

"We'll see where it goes from here," Johnson said, shortly before the game in which he scored two points—his first points for the Celtics since a game at Seattle in February 2002.

The NBA has no plans to pause the season, Commissioner Adam Silver said earlier this week in an interview with ESPN. But the league told teams earlier this week that it would prioritize the ABC national game slots on Christmas if games are postponed that day, meaning it was reserving the right to move another game into those 2:30 p.m., 5 p.m. and 8 p.m. Eastern time windows.

The other game times on Christmas are noon and 10:30 p.m., both on ESPN.

"We can't allow this to be a distraction," McMillan said before Atlanta faced Orlando on Wednesday night. "It is, but we have to get past that. ... We're hoping that we get some negative tests here in the next couple days and guys will be available as soon as possible and certainly for (Christmas). Players dream of having that opportunity to play on Christmas Day."

Saleh, Sirianni test positive for COVID-19, Stefanski back

NFL FLORHAM PARK, N.J. (AP)—The Cleveland Browns got their coach back on the sideline. The New York Jets and Philadelphia Eagles might be without theirs this weekend.

The Buffalo Bills will be without wide receiver Cole Beasley, who has been among the NFL's most outspoken critics of vaccinations.

Browns second-year coach Kevin Stefanski cleared COVID-19 protocols Wednesday and returned to the team after missing Monday's 16-14 home loss to Las Vegas. Stefanski also sat out the Browns' playoff win at Pittsburgh last season after testing positive.

"Good to be back," Stefanski told reporters on a Zoom call from the team's Berea, Ohio, facility. "Obviously, working remotely is something that we all did a bunch of last year so it is definitely doable to work remotely, game plan remotely, run meetings, etc., but good to be back in person."

Meanwhile, the Jets' Robert Saleh and Eagles' Nick Sirianni tested positive for COVID-19 after feeling symptoms in the morning.

For New York, it's the latest in what has been a surge of coronavirus cases on the team. Tight ends coach Ron Middleton coached practice in Saleh's absence after finding out about 45 minutes before that the head coach wouldn't be able to run the session. Saleh, who plans to continue running team meetings virtually, could return as soon as Thursday if he no longer shows symptoms and tests negative.

If Saleh doesn't test out of the COVID-19 protocols before Sunday, Middleton will also serve as the head coach in New York's game against Jacksonville.

"I'm not reinventing the wheel here," Middleton said during a video call. "I'm trying to steer the ship, keep the ship steered in the right direction."

Sirianni also tested positive after feeling symptoms. He's isolating at a hotel and pass game coordinator Kevin Patullo would handle coaching duties if Sirianni doesn't clear protocols in time for Sunday's game against the Giants.

"I'm feeling OK," said Sirianni, who was on the sideline for Philadelphia's win over Washington on Tuesday night. "I'm feeling a little bit better now, which is good. The rest of the week, I'll be in every meeting, obviously virtually. ... I'll be running those. Just business as usual."

The Jets have 18 players from the active and practice squad rosters, including injured reserve, on the COVID-19 list: wide receivers Elijah Moore, Jeff Smith and Vyncint Smith; tight end Kenny Yeboah; guard Alijah Vera-Tucker; defensive linemen Folorunso Fatukasi, John Franklin-Myers, Jonathan Marshall, Hamilcar Rashed Jr., and Tanzel Smart; linebackers Blake Cashman, Noah Dawkins and Hamsah Nasirildeen; cornerbacks Michael Carter II and Lamar Jackson; safeties Ashtyn Davis and Sharrod Neasman; and special teams ace Justin Hardee.

"It's crazy," left tackle George Fant said. "You see other teams get hit with it. I guess it's our turn."

Now that they've got their coach back, the Browns hope more players return as they get ready on a short week for a Christmas visit to the NFC-leading Green Bay Packers (11-3). The Browns are on the fringe of the playoff picture.



New York Jets head coach Robert Saleh leaves the field at the end of an NFL football game against the Miami Dolphins, Sunday, Dec. 19, 2021, in Miami Gardens, Fla. AP

The Browns were rocked by the virus last week, when an outbreak led to 22 players missing the rescheduled game. Quarterback Baker Mayfield still hasn't produced a required negative test and his status at Green Bay is unclear.

Browns tight end Austin Hooper and linebacker Jacob Phillips also returned, but starting rookie cornerback Greg Newsome was added to the COVID-19 list. He has missed the past two games with a concussion.

Stefanski said players who tested positive before Dec. 15 will be eligible to play Saturday — the conclusion of their 10-day window — so long as they're asymptomatic. That would include Mayfield and backup QB Case Keenum. Third-stringer Nick Mullens and played well in his first start since last season with San Francisco.

Bills coach Sean McDermott fully favors vaccinations, but declined to weigh in on Beasley being sidelined at New England after testing positive for COVID-19.

"The facts are the facts," McDermott said, regarding the efficacy of vaccinations before adding he respects the decisions his players make.

Beasley will not play because he is unvaccinated and will have to miss a minimum 10 days after being placed on the reserve/COVID-19 list on Tuesday.

In notes posted on his Instagram account, Beasley said he is experiencing mild symptoms. He then placed the blame on the NFL's protocols by writing: "Just to be clear, Covid is not keeping me out of this game. The rules are."

Actually, COVID-19 is preventing him from playing because he tested positive. Under newly adopted rules, vaccinated players can return over a shorter period based on testing results.

At issue for the receiver is vaccinated players are just as likely to have COVID-19 while being allowed to play because they are only tested once a week, as opposed to unvaccinated players being tested daily. The rules also

state unvaccinated players testing positive will have to spend at least 10 days in the protocol. That puts him in jeopardy of potentially missing two games because of a lack of practice time.

Buffalo currently has seven players on the COVID-19 list, including starting left tackle Dion Dawkins and right guard Jon Feliciano, both of whom are believed to be vaccinated.

Also:

■ Brandin Cooks, who leads the team with 945 yards receiving, and kicker Ka'imi Fairbairn were among three players the Houston Texans placed on the COVID-19 list, bringing their total to 16 players.

Reserve linebacker Eric Wilson was also added as the Texans prepare to host the Los Angeles Chargers on Sunday.

The Texans will likely have to sign a kicker to fill in for Fairbairn; they don't have another one on the roster or practice squad. Safety Justin Reid, a high school kicker, handled kickoff duties in a preseason game this season when Fairbairn was injured. But Reid

missed last week's game with a concussion and it's unclear if he will be available Sunday.

■ The Chargers added standout running back Austin Ekeler and receiver Jaylen Guyton to the list, but coach Brandon Staley was optimistic both can return to play Sunday against Houston.

Ekeler is the Chargers' leading rusher and third-leading receiver, while Guyton has been a big-play threat, catching a TD pass in three straight games while racking up 187 yards on just nine catches.

■ Baltimore put five players on the list: safety Geno Stone, defensive tackle Justin Madubuike, linebacker Chris Board, linebacker Kristian Welch and practice squad tackle David Sharpe. That brings the number of players on that list to 15, including four from the practice squad.

The Ravens play at Cincinnati on Sunday with first place in the AFC North on the line.

■ Pittsburgh placed linebackers Devin Bush and Marcus Allen and offensive tackle Zach Banner on the COVID-19 list on Wednesday.

■ The Colts placed starting cornerback Rock Ya-Sin and backup defensive end Kemo Turay on the list, along with tight end Farrod Green of the practice squad.

■ Seattle tight end Will Dissly went on the list. Running back Alex Collins was activated off the list that he went on last Thursday.

■ Tennessee placed starting left guard Rodger Saffold on the COVID-19 list. He's the third Titans player on that list, joining wide receiver Dez Fitzpatrick and cornerback Elijah Molden.

■ Veteran punter Andy Lee was added to the COVID-19 list by Arizona.

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Easy math: Showalter pledges Mets to lead, lean on analytics



NEW YORK
(AP)—Long before Buck

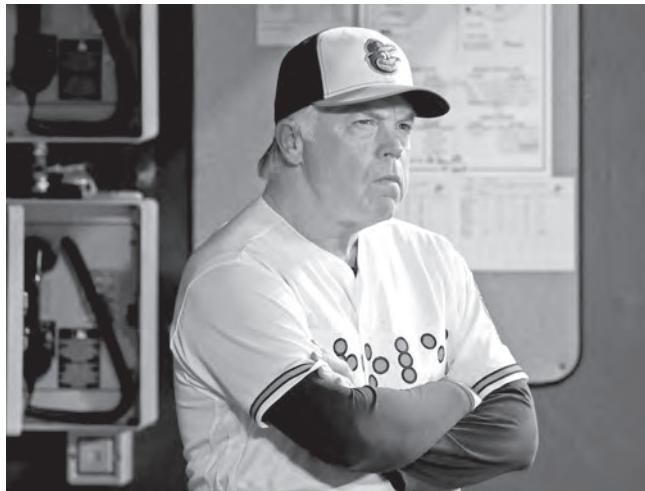
Showalter had access to analytics departments and all their graphs, spreadsheets and heat maps, he had his wife, Angela, hand-drawing spray charts to inform defensive positioning for the 1987 Fort Lauderdale Yankees in the Class A Florida State League.

Is the New York Mets 65-year-old manager going to resist the info cooked up on his analysts' computers?

Just the opposite.

"There are going to be some guys there who are going to say, 'Sheesh, can I get a break from this guy?'" he said.

Showalter insisted Tuesday at his introductory news conference that if the Mets don't succeed during his tenure, it won't be for sabermetric ignorance. He's eager for advanced analytics, he said, even bemoaning the lack of data brewed up by Baltimore's bare-bones front office when his previous job with the Orioles ended in 2018.



Baltimore Orioles manager Buck Showalter stands in the dugout in the seventh inning of a baseball game against the Toronto Blue Jays, Tuesday, Sept. 18, 2018, in Baltimore. AP

BASEBALL

From Page 32

cause I have nothing against you guys it's just this is the first time ever we're doing this tryout and making the cut," he said.

Flores echoed Sablan's feelings about making the difficult decision to cut the 20 players who have been training with the national pool the past couple of months.

"I told them, no hard feelings. If you're in our shoes you will see how hard it was to cut it down. It just breaks my heart to make the cut."

Cruz congratulated the 36 players that made the first cut and at the same time thanked the 20 players who worked with them.

"To the ones still trying out, good luck to you all. I know that everyone is fighting for their spot into this national team but the sad truth is, not everyone will be in it. So train on your off days from tryouts and it'll show who really is

"If you think that I'm going to let somebody beat us by having better analytical information or because someone on staff doesn't understand it, well, I'm not going to talk about it," Showalter said. "We'll show you."

Thirty years after George Steinbrenner gave him his first big league managing job with the New York Yankees, Showalter is back in the Big Apple. His boss this time also has deep pockets and ambition to turn coin into championships.

Second-year owner Steve Cohen committed \$254.5 million to ace Max Scherzer, infielder Eduardo Escobar and outfielders Starling Marte and Mark Canha before rosters froze when ownership locked out the players on Dec. 2. The club then turned its attention to finding a replacement for Luis Rojas after the 40-year-old manager was dismissed in October.

Showalter interviewed with general manager Billy Eppler and team president Sandy Alderson before meeting with

Cohen as a finalist last week. Cohen tweeted Saturday that Showalter was his man and signed him to a three-year deal.

Showalter beat out Houston Astros bench coach Joe Espada and Tampa Bay Rays bench coach Matt Quatraro—both up-and-comers in their 40s who are known to be well-versed in baseball's data revolution.

The edge went to Show-

alter, who convinced Mets leadership of his ability—and excitement—to adapt, along with all the other skills he's developed since taking his first minor league managing job in 1985.

"We looked at a number of criteria spanning from culture and connectivity with players and staff, to embracing new practices in both player performance and analytics," Eppler

cut to bring down the roster to the Mini Games maximum roster of 20 players.

"Now a lot of the guys are really progressing. You can really see their excellent hand-and-eye coordination coming back. On Saturdays we play our mini scrimmages between the squads and normally we go nine innings and it's been very good. After two seasons of nothing, everything is finally coming back."

The veteran national coach is also looking at some leeway for the CNMI to bring a 25-man roster for the Mini Games that includes five alternates.

"This is basically two squads. If we can take everybody and allows us to form two teams, why not. We're only allowed to take 20, but we're trying to clarify with (Mini Games Organizing Committee CEO) Ben Babauta and (MGOC chair) Marco Peter if we can have alternates because every other sport has alternates," said Flores.

committed and putting in the time to win their spot. Come to the tryouts ready and also with a positive attitude," he said.

Sablan said sadly none of the four players from Tinian and two players from Rota made the first cut. He said Tinian players were stymied from continuing the tryouts because of the cancellation of flights between Saipan and Tinian. He also commended Rota players for making it throughout the end of the first cut.

Flores said the mere fact that Tinian and Rota players were given the opportunity to come and try out was already a win for the Saipan Baseball League and its goal to have a CNMI-wide participation in next year's Mini Games.

"We saw some talent but maybe if they start playing with us more and start playing in our league...don't get me wrong we won't count them out next time. We will be the ones to call them next time. They're promising but maybe not up to par

compared to the Saipan guys yet. Other than that, thanks for Tinian and Rota players for coming out," he said.

On the expected availability of the Francisco "Tan Ko" M. Palacios Baseball Field by Feb. 1, 2022, Sablan said SBL may not have time to start a season, but said scrimmages could be the next best thing for the CNMI National Baseball Team. In fact, he said those who were cut already volunteered to form a team to play against the nationals.

"A lot of the boys that were cut they also came out and asked if they can form a team just to take on the national team. Now I have to come out and ask the SBL president if he can help us out by getting real umpires just to call the game. They're taking it positively and not taking the cut negatively," he said.

Flores said the remaining players are doing really well and it will be another tough decision when the coaching staff makes its second and last

cut to bring down the roster to the Mini Games maximum roster of 20 players.

"Now a lot of the guys are really progressing. You can really see their excellent hand-and-eye coordination coming back. On Saturdays we play our mini scrimmages between the squads and normally we go nine innings and it's been very good. After two seasons of nothing, everything is finally coming back."

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NMA

From Page 32

and Australia on the shortlist of finalists with the latter eventually getting OAA's nod and the nomination for the World Athletics Awards 2021, which was held virtually last Dec. 1. The Costa Rican Athletics Federation ended up winning World Athletics Member Federation of the Year Competition, beating Australia, Kenya, Czech Republic, Ecuador, and Japan.

"We take this opportunity to once again congratulate you on your being an Oceania finalist and we encourage

you to keep up your incredible work in your federation. We look forward to 2022 and to working with you in continuing to create excellence in athletics in your federation and most of all we look forward to assisting your federation in providing a fabulous Pacific Mini Games. With so much planned for 2022, the NMI will certainly be in the running again for a top spot in the Oceania Area," OAA Executive Director Yvonne Mullins said in a letter to Tebuteb.

Other than its stakeholders in the private and public sectors, NMA partnered with

DTE Endurance and Race Roster in hosting actual and virtual races; with the Public School System and McDonald's Saipan for the return of the All Schools Athletics Championships; with Northern Marianas Sports Association and also PSS for the All Schools Cross Country Championships; Run Saipan for a series of 5K races; CHCC Community Guidance Center for the Marianas Relay; and with both public and private agencies for its other events, such as the Annual Turkey Trot Run.

To wrap up the season, the NMA did the actual Christmas

Island Relay race last Saturday, drawing runners from all ages and affiliations.

"On behalf of NMA, thank you all to our partners, sponsors, volunteers, and our media friends for giving us the opportunity to continue delivering our activities despite the current circumstances. Thank you all for your continued support and we are looking forward to writing the next chapter of our sport in the years to come. NMA wishes everyone a Merry Christmas and a prosperous New Year," NMA general secretary Robin Sapong said. (PR)

said. "We wanted to assess how the candidates problem solve, how they communicated and most importantly, how they would shape a culture with high operational standards.

"It was Buck's ability to connect to a wide range of people, his drive to compete, his curiosity blended with his experience, and his overall adaptability that led us to naming him manager."

Showalter, a three-time AL Manager of the Year, is 1,551-1,517-1 (.506 winning percentage) in 20 big league seasons with the Yankees, Arizona Diamondbacks, Texas Rangers and Orioles. He's been to the playoffs five times but never won a pennant. He said winning a World Series isn't "going to define my life," but that it "does wake me up every day now."

He has been away from the dugout for only three seasons, but several strategies have boomed or evolved in that time. Relief openers have gone mainstream after the Tampa Bay Rays first experimented with them during the 2018 season, and defensive shifts have nearly doubled, occurring in 31% of plate appearances in 2021. Showalter was at ease facing dozens of New York reporters on Zoom, cracking jokes with a few journalists who covered him with the Yankees from 1992-95. He also has worked on TV for ESPN, MLB Network and the Yankees' YES Network. His comfort in front of a microphone was a selling point, Eppler said.

"This isn't something you put your headphones on and say, 'I don't listen to it,'" Showalter said of New York. "It's there. But there's no place like it when you get it right."

This news conference came with an odd challenge—because of the ongoing lockout, team representatives have been advised not to discuss players publicly, meaning Showalter wasn't supposed to mention the names of any Mets. He made it through most of the hourlong session before slipping up a few times.

Tribune Sports Scores

NBA STANDINGS

EASTERN CONFERENCE

	Atlantic Division	W	L	Pct	GB
Brooklyn	21	9	.700	—	
Philadelphia	16	15	.516	5 1/2	
Boston	16	16	.500	6	
Toronto	14	15	.483	6 1/2	
New York	14	17	.452	7 1/2	

Southeast Division

Miami	19	13	.594	—
Washington	16	15	.516	2 1/2
Charlotte	16	17	.485	3 1/2
Atlanta	14	16	.467	4
Orlando	7	25	.219	12

Central Division

Chicago	19	10	.655	—
Milwaukee	20	13	.606	1
Cleveland	19	13	.594	1 1/2
Indiana	13	19	.406	7 1/2
Detroit	5	25	.167	14 1/2

WESTERN CONFERENCE

	Southwest Division	W	L	Pct	GB
Memphis	19	13	.594	—	
Dallas	15	15	.500	3	
San Antonio	12	18	.400	6	
New Orleans	11	21	.344	8	
Houston	10	22	.313	9	

	Northwest Division	W	L	Pct	GB
Utah	21	9	.700	—	
Denver	15	15	.500	6	
Minnesota	15	16	.484	6 1/2	
Portland	13	19	.406	9	
Oklahoma City	11	19	.367	10	

	Pacific Division	W	L	Pct	GB
Phoenix	25	5	.833	—	
Golden State	25	6	.806	1/2	
L.A. Clippers	17	15	.531	9	
L.A. Lakers	16	16	.500	10	
Sacramento	13	20	.394	13 1/2</td	

NMSA names 6 athletes of the month



The Northern Marianas Sports Association has honored Azriel Fatialofa, David Barnhouse, Beatrice Gross, Jazzroy Villagomez, Malou Malasarte, and Sefric Veloria with athlete of the month

plums for their outstanding athletic performance in September and October.

Fatialofa, Barnhouse, Gross, Villagomez, Malasarte, and Veloria are eligible to be named Athletes of the Year and will be recognized at the annual NMSA Awards Banquet early next year.

SEPTEMBER AWARDEES

Azriel Fatialofa

Basketball player Azriel Fatialofa was named female athlete of the month for September. The 5'11" Fatialofa is a student of Grace Christian Academy and winner of the first Player of the Week honors in the IT&E Interscholastic Basketball League, Middle School Division. The

Week 1 honors covered the Sept. 15 and Sept. 17 games and Fatialofa scored 34 points to lead the GCA Eagles to a 3-0 lead. She was such a dominant force in the league that, at one point when Hopwood Junior High School 1 (Sept. 29) was threatening to hand GCA its first loss, Fatialofa came off the bench and scored 20 of the Eagles' 28 points. Fatialofa led GCA to an unbeaten record (7-0) in the regular season. Fatialofa is also part of the NMI National Basketball Program, attending select players' training sessions on Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Saturdays.



David Barnhouse

David Barnhouse was named male athlete of the month for September after he successfully competed in the first-ever Oceania Weightlifting Championships to be tested via Internet. Competing in the 109+ kilogram category, he snatched 110 kg (242 lbs), clean and jerked 145 kg (319 lbs), for a total of 255 kg (561 lbs). His efforts earned him a silver medal and his first ever ranking in the Oceania Weightlifting Federation and International Weightlifting Federation. His accomplishments are particularly noteworthy because there were no crowds or audience to cheer/motivate his efforts. Additionally, Barnhouse is the head coach for the CNMI national weightlifting team, doing double duty as an athlete and as a coach.

Team Kio-Rampage finals set for Dec. 29

By MARK RABAGO
mark_rabago@saipantribune.com
ASSOCIATE EDITOR

 The Tinian Amateur Basketball Association announced that the finals of the Island-wide Men's Bud Light Basketball League will now be played next week on Wednesday, Dec. 29, at the Tinian Youth Center.

TABA president Christopher SN King said the winner-take-all championship game between Team Kio and Rampage will start at 7pm. He also said there will no longer be any battle for third pitting Team CNMI as Devil Dog Warriors players are scheduled to leave the island that day.

"Reason for Team Marines pulling out because it's their last day to head back to their homes/location/headquarters/training camp. So, it will be only one game next Wednesday. So, Team CNMI automatically takes third place," he said.

King congratulated Team CNMI for taking third place and also thanked Devil Dog Warriors for taking part in

the league.

"I want to appreciate them for their full support, assistance, commitment, hard work, sweat, and time during this pandemic. To all the players, thank you for their time, patience, and understanding especially during this era of COVID-19," he said.

King also extended his gratitude to Tinian's basketball-crazy fans for enduring the many postponements of the league due to the local spread of COVID-19.

"Special thanks to the fans. They were awesome with their loud cheers. Thank you so much for all your support even if we sometimes can't hear the whistles being blown."

After more than a month of postponement, TABA finally got on with the playoffs of the Island-wide Men's Bud Light Basketball League last Nov. 22, but it proved to be short but sweet due to the pandemic reaching Tinian's shores a couple of days after.

The first game of the Tinian caging semifinals saw un-

defeated Team Kio punch the first finals ticket with a 97-82 victory over Team CNMI. They will be joined in the championship by Rampage a few hours later after they defeated Devil Dog Warriors, 65-58, in the second game.

Team Kio's Robert Reyes led all scorers with 29 points in the demolition of Team CNMI, while Dustin Sablan added 26 markers of his own. Dennis Borja and Louise Maligson paced Team CNMI in the loss with 22 and 20 markers, respectively.

Wesley Walker was the high-point man for Rampage with 25 points and he was ably supported by the 13 points of Leo Pascua. Devil Dog Warriors' losing cause was led by the 23 points of Jake Montgomery with Damon Kada and Zjonti Kubinski adding 14 and 11 points, respectively.

The rest of the teams making up the Island-wide Men's Bud Light Basketball League for 2021 are Power Builders, Ko Bees, RNV Construction, and SMA Flyers.



King

OCTOBER AWARDEES

Beatrice Gross

Beatrice Gross was female student athlete of the month for October. This, after she was selected as the most valuable player in the Summer Season PSS Elementary Interscholastic Soccer League that ended on Oct. 6, 2021. The 10-year-old is a multi-sport student-athlete of Saipan International School. Playing as a goalie in the Summer Season of the ISL, her defense helped the SIS Elementary Team win the Championship against the Spring Season



Jazzroy Villagomez

Jazzroy Villagomez, a 5th Grader at Garapan Elementary School, was named male student athlete of the month for October. He was the best player on the school's team that won third

place in the Summer Season PSS Elementary Interscholastic Soccer League that ended on Oct. 6, 2021. He was very dominant throughout the league and was the Golden Boot winner. He scored a total of 29 goals, including 10 goals in the quarterfinals match. He averaged almost five goals per match in league play. Villagomez is now a very active soccer player. He plays for Paire Football Club under two competitive divisions—the U-12 Coed Division and the U-15 Boys Division. Villagomez is also in the current batch of trainees of the NMIFA Junior National Academy. The academy is the pool of elite players being groomed to be future members of the NMI national teams.



Fastest 1 Mile Road Race on Dec. 31

By MARK RABAGO
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ASSOCIATE EDITOR

 Run Saipan will host the inaugural 1 Mile Road Race on Dec. 31 from the southbound lane of Beach Road next to the World War II Tank Memorial along Quartermaster Road.

Check-in time is at 6am with start time 30 minutes later at 6:30am and medals will be awarded to the Top 3 men's and woman's runners overall.

Run Saipan president Edward Dela Cruz Jr. said this race is to crown who is the fastest 1-mile road runner on Saipan before the local running community says goodbye to 2021.

"As a runner I've always wished someone would hold a one-way, 1-mile road race to be able to run my fastest without obstacles. No one has held one for a long time on Saipan so I thought we might as well do it as Run Saipan

and what better way than New Year's Eve. I know there are people on Saipan that want to test their 1-mile capability in a race-setting and I would rather see that done on the road than on the track and field," he said.

Dela Cruz added that track races are tactical and in road races there really is no time for tactics for a one-miler.

"Once the runners out of site good luck catching up. You're either first or last. Make no mistake this is a competitive event. So this event will crown the champion. Medals will be given out to Top 3 male and female finishers. It will be annual and to crown who is the king and queen of the 1-mile road race. The course will be measured to be exactly 1 mile. So for people not vying for first place can use this to find out where they are with an 'official' race time and not by GPS or sports watch.

Technology makes mistakes. Hand-timing on a measured course does not."

And since this is race on the main road of Beach Road, the Run Saipan president reminded motorists to take an alternate route as the outer lane of the southbound lane of Beach Road from the World War II Tank

Memorial will be closed between 6am and 6:45am next Friday, Dec. 31.

Dela Cruz also added that the 1 Mile Road Race will be the substitute for this month's underground race. "We don't have any more time to schedule a 5K with the Christmas Island Relay launching and our Dec. 31st race."

For more information, email runsaipan@gmail.com or call or text (670) 287-0891. Registration link is <https://docs.google.com/.../1FAIpQLSFVaz7Rzs9p.../viewform>.



Malou Malasarte

Female athlete of the month for October Malou Malasarte reigned supreme in two divisions in the TakeCare Badminton Open 2021. She first clinched the women's B singles title after beating Rowena Houck, 21-20, 21-5. Earlier in the semis, Malasarte was paired with the much younger and quicker Angie Ito and pulled off a 21-14, 14-21, 21-17 win to move into the singles finale. In the doubles, Malasarte teamed up with Hajin Oh and they topped Bracket A and eventually larded it over in the division after beating Bracket B winners Lance Gallardo and Hannah Choi, 21-18, 21-10. Malasarte also played in the women's B doubles, but she and Houck lost to Choi and Windy Fernandez in the semis.

Sefric Veloria

Sefric Veloria was named male athlete of the month after he took home the men's C singles and doubles events in the TakeCare Badminton Open 2021. He was undefeated in the single play, securing the championship following a 21-14, 21-18 victory over Paulo Quidato. In the doubles competition, he and Dez Antonio were undefeated in four games to reach the finals. Veloria and Antonio lost to Leonard Manuel and Noel Waitwat in the first game of the finals, 17-21, but recovered in the last two, 21-12, 21-17, to win the division. Veloria is among many newcomers in the badminton community, but is able to improve his game quickly as he regularly trains with players in the Class A level. (PR)

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Dela Cruz



Brown scores 34 points, Celtics beat Cavaliers, 111-101

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NMSA names 6 athletes of the month

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SAIPAN TRIBUNE



CNMI National Baseball Team manager Manny Sablan, right, poses with 27 of the 36 members of the training pool that made the first cut for the CNMI National Baseball Team for next year's Pacific Mini Games at the Miguel "Tan Ge" Basa Ballfield Wednesday night.

MARK RABAGO

By MARK RABAGO
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ASSOCIATE EDITOR

The training pool for the CNMI National Baseball Team for next year's Northern Marianas Pacific Mini Games is now down to 36 after national team manager Manny Sablan and national coaches Deron Flores and Gary Cruz cut 20 players from those trying out.

Making it to the second round of tryouts are Pat Alepuyu, Dennis Cabrera, Jerald Cabrera, Diego Camacho, Devyn Flores, Juan Iguel, Ben Jones Jr., Darion Jones, Byron Kaitpat, A.J. Lizama, Poland Masaharu Jr., Franco Nakamura, John Peter Sablan, Nokki Saralu, Lorenzo Sebaklim, Nate Smith, Anthony Tenorio, Shane Yamada, Tyrone Omar, Joshua Jones, Jesus Iguel, Lamarc Iguel, Jordan Suel, Keoni Lizama,



Brian Camacho, Nathan Camacho, Patrick Tenorio, Ze Lizama, Jose Lizama Jr., Jacob L. Babauta, Nate Guerrero, Angel Palacios, Eric Palacios, T.J. Cruz, Giovanni Mira, and T.J. Dela Cruz.

Sablan said trimming the national baseball team training pool from 56 to 36 was one of the toughest decisions of his coaching and managing career.

"Dec. 15 was the first cut and it wasn't easy coming from me and the two coaches. To make that phone call to tell them that they're cut was tough. We explained to them the process and thanked them for coming out. They were all OK and they understand. From the beginning we explained that probably a lot of you guys won't be happy with the result but please don't take it personally because it's just a result."

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Paire, TanHoldings top Dove fall league

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

Paire Football Club 1 and TanHoldings ruled their respective divisions in the Dove Women's Fall League 2021.

Paire 1 topped the Intermediate Division after nosing out MP Unit-

ed Football Club, 3-2, in the championship game played last Dec. 12 at the NMI Soccer Training Center in Koblerville. In the Premier Division, TanHoldings finished the shortened

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Paire Football Club 1's Lindsay Davis, left, tries to maneuver her way out of the defense of MP United Football Club's Amy Quito-Weiss during their title game in the Intermediate Division of the Dove Women's Fall League 2021 last Dec. 12 at the NMI Soccer Training Center in Koblerville.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO



Runners head out to the course during the 2021 PSS/NMA Cross Country Championships held at the old Saipan Country Club golf course in October.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

NMA shares honor with partners

Northern Marianas Athletics acknowledged its partners and stakeholders as key components in the continued implementation of its programs amid these challenging times.

The NMA carefully navigated its way through the COVID-19 pandemic, hosting different events and competitions that brought athletics back on track after facing setbacks in 2020 due to the worldwide health crisis. NMA's success in resuming athletics-related activities and providing

the much-needed races for the sports community did not go unnoticed, as the Oceania Athletics Association named the group as one of the Oceania Area Finalists for the World Athletics Awards 2021. Oceania is one of six Area Associations under World Athletics, which has 214 international member federations.

"We are honored with this recognition, which we would like to share to

our partners in developing the sport of athletics in the NMI. We certainly can't do it without our partners from the community. All of us are volunteers in this program and our partners make it's easier for us to achieve successes across our community and our regions. The phrase, 'teamwork makes the dream work' comes to mind with this honor from OAA," NMA president Ray Tebuteb said.

The NMA joined the Cook Islands

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